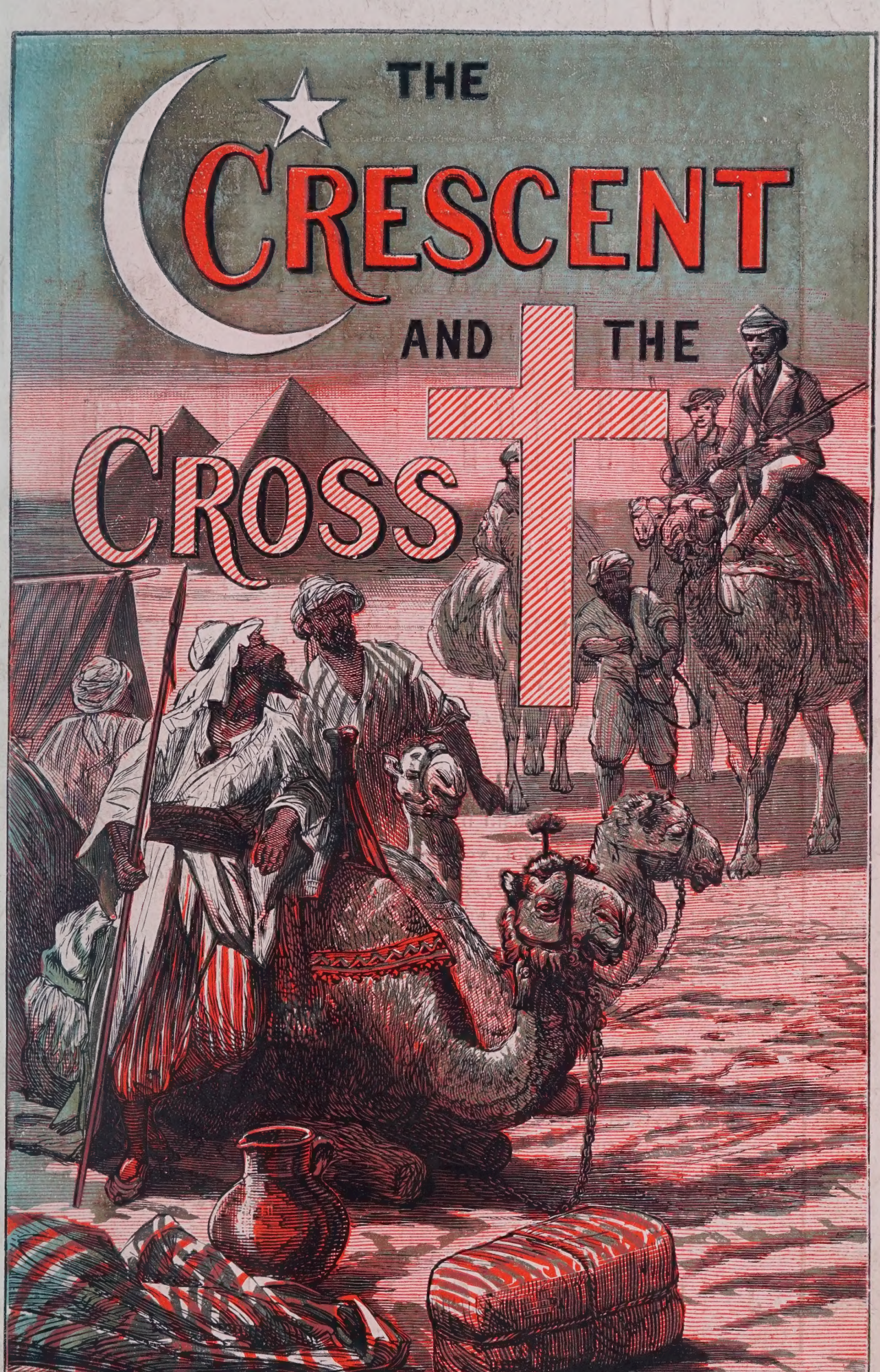
# THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS



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THE

# CRESCENT AND THE CROSS;

OR,

## ROMANCE AND REALITIES

OF

## EASTERN TRAVEL.

BY

ELIOT WARBURTON.

REPRINTED FROM THE EDITION OF 1844.
(*UNABRIDGED.*)

WARD, LOCK, AND CO.

LONDON: WARWICK HOUSE, SALISBURY SQUARE, E.C.
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# PREFACE.

IMMUTABILITY is the most striking characteristic of the East: from the ancient strife of Cain and Abel, to the present struggle between the Crescent and the Cross, its people remain in their habits of thought and action less changed than the countries they inhabit. The fertile Vale of Siddim has become the coffin of the Dead Sea, and the barriers of the Nile have rolled down from Æthiopia to the Delta; but the patriarch still "sits at the door of his tent on the Plain of Mamré," and the Egyptian still cultivates his river-given soil in the manner practised by the subjects of the Pharaohs.

Over this Elder World, Time has let fall, as it were, a mighty curtain, which, uplifted, reveals to us the very scenery wherein Paradise was Lost and was Regained—wherein Karnac and Baalbec rose, and where they still vindicate the marvellous traditions of the Past. We find that scenery still peopled by the Ishmaelite; and the stranger still received by Sheikhs of Abraham's fashion, who feast him on the fare that was set before the Angels.

And so it is in later times: the Antiquary now speculates on the sources of the Nile, and gazes on the Sphynx with the same doubts and wonder as Herodotus; the Pilgrim kneels at the Shrine of the Nativity as the Magi knelt two thousand years ago; and the Scholar finds the sculptures of Telmessus convicting Phidias of a plagiarism.

This identity of the Present with the Past, and the contrast between the fever and tumult of European life, and the silence and repose of the East, will be understood by those who have passed from the gay and turbulent thoroughfares of Naples to the desolate beauty of Pompeii. The transition strikes forcibly on the imagination, and invests Oriental travel with a peculiar charm.

Nor is it only antiquity, piety, or scholastic lore that lends to the East so powerful an interest: the variety that strikes upon the senses—the delicious climate, scarcely obtained in our conservatories—the wild animals, only known to our menageries, and the wayside flowers, that rival our most choice exotics—all these are pleasant things. Then, in the cities, there is the mystery that envelops woman—the romance of our daily life—the masquerading-looking population—politics and manners of the time of Moses, Saracen society, cloudless days, and Arabian nights.

By such experiences, the traveller will probably find his perceptions excited, and his faculties developed; while his sympathies are expanded and awakened

> "To all that is enjoyed where'er he goes,
> And all that is endured."

The best of all this is, that he becomes, perhaps, more catholic-hearted; and the worst is, that perhaps he turns author, and finds a difficulty in accounting to his readers for assuming such a character: for we seem to have writers on the East sufficient in number, and of all descriptions; from the high-born lady, to the hardy Burckhardt—

from the massive prose of Robinson, to the deep, thoughtful poetry of Milnes—from the calm researches of Wilkinson and Lane, to the brilliance of the author of Eōthen—from the scoffing scepticism of Volney, to the graceful piety of Lord Lindsay.

The only apologies I have to offer for intruding on such company are these. Previously to visiting the East, I had made myself familiar with their works, yet I found much novelty, as well as interest, in my personal experience; and I hoped to be fortunate enough to convey some of that novelty, if not of that interest, to my pages. Our relations with the East, too, have considerably altered within the last few years; Egypt is become our shortest, and, therefore, our *only* path to India; the Church of England is at length represented at Jerusalem; and the brave, industrious, and intelligent tribes of the Lebanon have made overtures for our protection and our missionaries. Moreover, information with respect to the East is so various, and scattered over so wide a surface of literature, that I thought a slight compendium of its leading points might not be unacceptable to that extensive class, who can only "read as they run."

I have not intentionally followed in the footsteps, or used the thoughts of any author: but I confess to have borrowed freely, in other respects, from as many as seemed suited to my purpose. I have pursued no settled plan of writing or classification, but have spoken of each matter as it seemed to suggest itself in the course of a sort of imaginary conversation with the reader.

I am anxious to guard against the charge of presumption in adopting a title for my work, which might seem ostentatious when compared with its very humble pretensions. It suggested itself to me as being comprehensive of the Oriental races, as well as of their creeds; and, at the same time, so vague as not to pledge me to any particular line of dissertation. I should also, perhaps, apologize for using *our* old Oriental appellations, instead of those which the Arabic mode of pronunciation has now rendered customary. I think, however, the reader of the Arabian Nights will not find fault with me for speaking of Viziers, Sultans, Cairo, and Damascus, instead of Wezeers, Sooltauns, Masr, and El Shām.

Finally, I have to apologize for apologizing at such a length, and will at once put myself *en route* with the reader, who is kind enough to accompany me. Now, Travel! we are all thine own. Onward with the eager horses that bound forward at thy voice! Onward with thy gallant ship, that lies straining at her anchor! Onward! over the wide, deep, dashing sea, that owns thee for its master, to the boundless desert that soon shall be thy slave!

LONDON, E. W.
*November*, 1844.

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* I wish here to correct an error that I have become aware of since the text was printed. Mr. Nicholayson is of *Moravian*, not of Jewish birth, as I supposed.

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# THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE OUTWARD BOUND.

And, oh! when the glad waves foam around,
And the wind blows fair and free,
The health that we drank to the Outward-bound
Will come back to their memory.

Old friends will still seem near them,
In their ocean-cradled sleep;
And that dreaming thought will cheer them,
Far away on the lonely deep.

Then fill, while the mid-watch passes,
Fill, the toast, let it circle round,
From full hearts and brimming glasses
And, hurrah! for the Outward-bound!

MRS. NORTON.

We took leave of Old England and the Old Year together. New Year's daylight found us standing on Southampton Pier, in front of an avalanche of sun-gilt mist, through which a few spires shot up, by way of signal that a town lay buried beneath it. The Oriental steamship lay about a gun-shot from the shore, sucking in a mingled mass of passengers and luggage through a cavernous mouth in her cliff-like sides; boatload after boatload was swallowed like mere spoonfuls, and it seemed marvellous how even her aldermanic bulk could find "stomach for them all." I had the Polyphemian boon of being devoured last, and was thus a mere observer of the partings and departings of the "Outward bound."

Mrs. Norton's noble song has given a definite form of poetry to what many a rugged heart has felt that phrase imply.

One cannot look upon a hundred people, leaving their native country, for years, if not for ever, and think of it as an indifferent event. One knows that all these queer-looking externals of dress and feature are rude hieroglyphics, containing as deep a meaning of exile, adventure, dangers, and self-sacrificing love, as ever agitated the heart of a Tancred, a Columbus, or the pilgrim fathers, and that's a pretty wide range. Nor are such the only cares that distract those pea-jacketed bosoms at a time like this: many a parting pang is shared by solicitude about a portmanteau, and many an exile starts from a home-sick reverie — to wonder "what the deuce they've done with his carpet-bag."

On mounting the ship's side, I found the lower deck one vast pile of luggage, vainly endeavouring to be identified by its distracted owners. It seemed as if some village of valises and boxes had been overthrown by an earthquake, and the surviving inhabitants were rushing about among the ruins, vainly seeking for their dead. No one seemed to find anything they wanted; cyclopean portmanteaus, "to be opened at Calcutta," presented themselves freely; saddlery and bullock-trunks were quite obtrusive; but little "indispensables" for the voyage were nowhere to be found—night garments were invisible, and remedies for sea-sickness reserved themselves for the overland journey.

Search and suspense were soon terminated by the sinking of the whole chaotic mass into the yawning depths of the hold, when the tomb-like hatches closed irrevocably over our "loved and lost."

After this bereavement, we all assembled on the upper deck, in involuntary and unconscious muster, each inspecting and inspected by his fellow-travellers.

With the exception of two or three families, every one seemed to be a stranger to every one, and each walked the deck in a solitude of his own. There were old men, with complexions as yellow as the gold for which they had sold their youth, returning to India in search of the health which their native country, longed for through life, denied them. There were young cadets, all eagerness and hope, though these, their predecessors, stood before them, like the mummies at Egyptian banquets, mementoes of the end of their young life's festival. There were missionary clergymen, with Ruth-like wives; merchants, with portfolios that never left their hands; young widows, with eyes black as their mourning, and sparkling as their useless marriage-ring; and one or two fair girls, Heaven knows what sorrow sent them there! wan-

derers from their English homes of peace and purity, over the ocean and the desert, to encounter the worse danger of Indian society. Then there were little cadets, in whom the pride of new-born independence and uniform contended with the thoughts of their home. There were sailors, with the blunt, manly bearing and free and open speech of their profession: and, lastly, there were two or three vague wanderers, like myself, who were only leaving England, as men leave a crowded room, to breathe awhile, freely, in the open East.

All these, in various groups, were scattered over the spacious upper deck, where there was no stain or interruption to lady's walk or sailor's rush; flush, smooth, and level, except for the graceful and almost imperceptible swell and rise towards the bows.

Below, the busy, bustling scene was very different. Miss Mitford herself might recognize the lower deck as a complete village. It was a street of cabins, over whose doors you read the names of the doctor, the baker, the butcher, the confectioner, the carpenter, and many others, besides the "quality at the west end," in the shape of officers' quarters. This street terminated in a rural scene; and the smell of new-mown hay, the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and the crowing of cocks, produced quite a pastoral effect.

It is true that the dairymaid wore moustaches, boathooks stood for shepherds' crooks, and the only swains were the boatswain and the coxswain, the former of whom was more given to whistling than to sighing.

Among these signs of peace and plenty, four carronades frowned rather gloomily; but a lamb tethered to one, and an unfortunate cat picketted to another, detracted from their awfulness.

Beneath the farm-yard throbbed the iron heart of the gigantic engine; and the "village tree" was represented by a copper funnel, up which the steam went sighing as if that heart would break.

About noon the last boat shoved off, the gangway curled itself up, a voice from the paddle-boxes said quietly—"Go on!"—and the vast vessel glided away smoothly as a gondola.

Within the ship was at work the convulsive energy of four hundred and fifty horse-power, that was to know no rest for three thousand miles; but without, all was so calm and undisturbed that she might have seemed still at anchor but for the villas and villages, and woods and lawns, that went scampering by, as if running a steeplechase to Salisbury. The beautiful Southampton Water, grim-looking Portsmouth, and the gentle Isle of Wight, fled rapidly away behind us, and then the shores of Old England began to fade from our view.

The first day of our voyage passed very silently away: many were sea-sick, and more were sick at heart; but in the evening there was a startling eruption of writing-desks, and a perfect flutter of pens preparing for the Falmouth post-bag. I think I see those eager scribes before me now: the man of business, with his swift and steady quill; women, gracefully bending over their twice-crossed notes (not the more legible, lady, for that tear); and lonely little boys, biting their bran-new pen-holders, and looking up to the ceiling in search of pleasant things to say to some bereaved mother. Her only comfort, perhaps, was to be that little scrawl, till her self-sacrificing heart was at rest for ever, or success had gilded her child's far-distant career.

While one end of the saloon was looking like a counting-house, the other was occupied by a set of old stagers, whose long smothered conversation broke out with vehemence over their brandy-and-water. These jolly old fellows seemed as if no one had any claims upon *their* correspondence, they were father and mother, brother and sister, to themselves, and their capacious waistcoats comprised their whole domestic circle. The following day we were at Falmouth, and then we were at sea.

## CHAPTER II.

### LIFE AT SEA.

Come! Let's on, where waters soothe us;
Where all winds can whistle free:
Come! once more we'll mate our spirit
With the spirit of the sea.

BARRY CORNWALL.

Et, n'est ce pas, en effet, une seconde patrie pour un Anglais, que les vaisseaux et la mer!

MADAME DE STAEL.

By the bright goddess who sprang from ocean's foam, there is something glorious in this, her native element! Every heart dilates, and every pulse beats high, as, with favouring breezes in a cloud of sail, we sweep along our "mountain path" over the Bay of Biscay. Philosophers tell us that we are composed of these same elements of air and ocean: and surely there is strong sympathy between us; for every wave we bound over, every breeze we breathe, is full of life and health, and energy and hope. There is no such remedy for drooping frame or pining spirit as the sea—I read it in every voice, and every eye, so changed within the last few days: colour is come back to the pale cheek, courage to the sinking heart, and health of mind and body to every voyager on board.

The joyous and light-hearted yet gallant bearing of the sailor is no accident; it issues naturally from his stirring and eventful career, from the exhilarating air that he breathes, the freedom from petty cares that he enjoys, and from the almost unconscious pride of a chivalrous profession, which there are no town-bred coxcombs to laugh down. His life is passed in perpetual activity upon the ocean—that one great battle-field of England, which her flag has swept in triumph from the time of the Armada, "when the winds and waves had commission from God to fight under British banners," until these latter days, when the fortresses of Syria crumbled into ruins beneath her thunder, and a nation, containing one-third of earth's inhabitants, bowed down before her.*

But to turn to details of that sea-life which any of my readers, who have not already experienced, may calculate upon having to live ere long in these amphibious days. Our time flows on smoothly and pleasantly enough; its course is so monotonous and even, that it seems rapid. The minds of sea-going men enjoy entire freedom from the daily cares that fever ordinary life; there is no wealth to be lost or gained, no letters to disturb into joy or sorrow, no intrusive visitors: you live in the open air, between the awful ocean and the glorious sky: there is very little loud laughter, but there is scarcely an anxious or a gloomy brow. Every one finds a listener, and, still more easily, does every one find communicativeness. Information on every subject that can interest the traveller only waits an audience. You will hear places, that sound most strange and distant, spoken of with the familiarity of citizens: if you inquire about any locality in the wide East, up starts a native of the spot; and a gazetteer of voices is ready to enlighten you on any subject of Geography, from Cairo to Hong-Kong.

On Sunday divine service was performed by a young missionary clergyman, to a grave and decorous audience. It was a striking scene, that little congregation of exiles, observing the ritual of their church in the midst of that stormy sea. The red ensign was laid upon a small table, and formed an altar not unappropriate to the occasion. Without, the wind was howling, and the waters weltered, and all nature seemed in commotion; but within, the peace of heaven was being promised, and seemed to shed its calm over the storm-tossed listeners to its voice. I regretted to observe that none of the crew, except the officers, and that none of the servants of the ship, formed part of the congregation. Surely the service which begins by addressing prince and peasant as brethren should not form part of the exclusive privileges of first-class passengers.

There are nearly two hundred souls on board, yet there is as much order and regularity as in an English hotel. At half-past eight in the morning a dressing bell resounds through the decks and galleries; the sleepers tumble off the bier-like places that are called berths, and a hundred razors are gleaming in a hundred miniature looking-glasses. Chemisettes and pea-jackets don't take long to put on, where the toilette process is an uncomfortable one: and at nine o'clock we are all quietly seated at a well-furnished breakfast, wherein milk fresh from the dairy on the deck, hot rolls, salt fish, and turtle cutlets figure advantageously. About ten the sunny deck is alive with inhabitants, not unsuccessfully imitating life ashore. Merry groups of children are playing about as if on a grass-plot. Twos and threes of men are walking the decks for exercise as eagerly as if they'd never reach the bowsprit in time; a tranquil group of smokers is arched over each paddle-box; ladies are reading, or working worsted monsters under the awning. An invalid or two is laid upon a sofa, gossiping now and then gently to a caught child, or a pausing passer-by. The sea is sparkling brightly as we move swiftly but smoothly over it. There is scarcely anything to remind us of our imprisonment; and, except for the silent sailor at the restless wheel, we might fancy ourselves at the pump-room at Bath, or on the chain-pier at Brighton.

In the care-free idleness of our voyage every trifle becomes a matter of interest; and the little incidents that assume the shape of news strongly illustrate the innate activity of human sympathies, and the necessity the mind feels for their exercise. It is true we no longer hear of "Monster-meetings," or "Anti-corn-law-agitation," or divisions of the House, with the speeches of their respective orators. But something "very like a whale" was seen this morning towards the coast of France; the sea is always rising up, or getting smooth; L.'s last joke has a busy time of it, and B.'s last anecdote is almost believed.

It did not require the isolation of our lot to create a deep interest about one of our fair invalids, who only appeared on deck when we entered on a milder climate. This poor girl was going to the Mediterranean in the hope of prolonging, not of saving, the life whose sunset hour was already visible in the bright colour of her hectic cheek. When I first saw her, her eyes, in which the light of

* The walls of Acre, impregnable even to Napoleon, lie heaped in ruins; Beyrout, Tyre, Sidon, Tortosa-Gibell, and Scanderoon are defenceless. The "Flowery Land" is laid open to the world, and a few scratches of a pen in Downing Street were the spell by which all this was wrought.

immortality seemed already shining, were gazing mournfully on those northern skies, which she was never to behold again—at least with an *upward* glance. Her helplessness, and youth, and beauty, seemed to exercise an influence over all around her; the little children spoke softly, and the helmsman seemed to move the wheel more gently, lest it should disturb her.

Is it the respect that men unconsciously feel towards those about to "put on immortality," or tenderness for those about to part from earth, that checks the wild laugh, and makes the eager foot tread lightly as it approaches that pale girl? I know not; but if the old theory that failing life could be restored by the infusion of healthy blood were true, I believe there is not a man in all that crowded ship who would not freely let his best blood flow for her whom he never saw before, and whom, after a few more sunsets, none will ever see again.

"Steward!" calls out a little cadet, with the tone of a great mogul, "are you bringing me that ale?"

"No, sir," replies a voice from below; "twelve dozen has been drunk since breakfast, and the purser won't allow any more till luncheon."

This reasonable restriction is soon removed: luncheon appears at twelve, and with it the desired beer. Four o'clock is struck in concert with the dinner-bell: no one is late, and no injustice is done on this occasion. Soup, fish, meat, poultry, confectionery, and fruit, irrigated freely by claret, hock, port, and sherry, afford matter of unceasing interest until five. Then the deck is again alive, and, if the sea be smooth, quadrillers and country-dancers bound over the depths of ocean as livelily as if they were all tritons and sea-nymphs. As the number of the former preponderates considerably, the latter are in great request. If the evening be stormy, the men gather round the oven between decks, and smoke, and listen to some sea song, or story, or political discussion, until seven o'clock bells summon them to tea, which is of a very substantial nature, followed by whist, chat, worsted-work, backgammon, and books for quiet people—like us. At ten there is a light supper, at eleven the candles are extinguished; you tumble into your berth, and the day is done.

I have lingered perhaps too long on these details of a modern sea-life, but a prejudice exists against the long voyage, which I think is without foundation now, and which requires only experience to overcome. There is no doubt that, for the infirm, the aged, and the very young, it is the most expedient means of reaching Malta and the shores of the Levant; and for all, the most healthful and convenient.

I have spoken of the Oriental steamer as I found her in two passages of upwards of 5000 miles in length; and before I leave the subject I must bear my willing testimony to the ability and courtesy of her captain, officers, and well-ordered crew, who do credit to their gallant ship, as she does to the country that produced her.

## CHAPTER III.

### GIBRALTAR—THE STRAITS—ALGIERS.

England, we love thee better than we know—
And this I learnt when, after wanderings long
'Mid people of another stock and tongue,
I heard, at length, thy martial music blow,
And saw thy warrior children to and fro
Pace, keeping war at one of those huge gates
Which, like twin giants, guard th' Herculean straits.

R. C. Trench.

On the first of January we left Southampton; on the evening of the second we took leave of England at Falmouth.* On the morning of the third we entered the much calumniated Bay of Biscay, which is no longer formidable since the introduction of steam. On the fifth we caught a glimpse of Cape Finisterre, and then passed from the Bay of Biscay into waveless waters, sheltered by the Spanish shore. Thenceforth, every morning rose with brighter suns and balmier breezes, until we came in sight of Capes St. Vincent and Trafalgar, backed by the beautiful mountain coast of Barbary.

The thoughts evoked by the scenes of Nelson's death and victory were not interrupted by the next bold headland. There was Gibraltar, and there England's flag was flying.

There was not a cloud in all the calm and glowing sky; the crescent moon, the emblem of Moslem power, was trembling over the picturesque land of the Moor, almost dissolved in a flood of sunshine. The sea, a filigree of blue and silver, faintly reflected the mountains of Medina Sidonia, among whose snowy summits we seemed to steer; and all Spain seemed taking a siesta as we dashed into the bay of Gibraltar.

The surrounding scenery, even divested of all association, is full of interest. An amphitheatre of finely undulated hills, with Algesiras in their bosom, sweeps along the left. In front, upon a slight eminence, the village of San Rocque grins like a set of white teeth, with precipices for its jaw, and the celebrated

* The Oriental steamers now go direct from Southampton, saving twenty-four hours.

Cork wood for its moustaches; beyond, is a range of dark green hills, backed by the mountains of Granada—the Sierra Nevada, a faint purple tinging the snow-flecked peaks. Further to the right there is a low, sandy tract, the neutral ground; and then, suddenly starting up to the height of fifteen hundred feet, stands the rock of Gibraltar, bound round with fort and battery, and bristling with innumerable guns. Its base is strewn with white houses, perched like sea-gulls wherever they could find a resting-place; and here and there little patches of dark-green announced a garden. Curtain, ravelin, and rampart, blend and mingle with nature's fortifications; and zig-zag lines from shore to summit look like conductors for the defenders' electric fire to flash along. Yet it is a maxim now, that no place, even this, is in itself impregnable; and it is not in the defences of wall or cliff, but in the Spartan's rampart of brave hearts within, that we proudly feel the British flag floats as securely here as on the Tower of London.

Here the invading Moors first established themselves in Spain—

"When Cava's traitor sire had called the band
That dyed her mountain streams with Gothic gore,"

and Gibel Tarik * became Gibraltar. A boat-ful of us was soon ashore, and scattered over the place, to shop, or cliff, or bastion, as their tastes prompted. I galloped off on a spirited little barb to the signal-station, the galleries, the Alameda, and the Moorish castle. Every spot was full of interest—from the craggy summit, with its magnificent view over Spain and Africa, to the mingled mass of house and rock, and verandahs almost meeting across the precipitous streets.

The population was very varied and picturesque: the Moors' "dusk faces, with white turban wreathed;" the Contrabandistas, with embroidered jacket and tinkling bridles, setting out for the hills; the Jew, with his gabardine, and that stern medallic countenance, in which the history of his race seems written; the merchant, with his sombrero; the Turk, with his tarboosh; the English sailor, and the plumed Highlander.

But the sudden change of climate and vegetation strikes one more, perhaps, than any other. A few days ago, wrapped in great coats, I was shivering among leafless trees: to-day, a light sailor's jacket feels oppressive, and the cactus, aloe, and geranium, are flowering in profusion wherever they can find opportunity, on the steep and rugged rock.

* The Hill of Tarik, the name of the Saracen leader.

We sailed as the evening gun was fired. The coast of Barbary looked beautiful in the fading light, which harmonized well with that land of old romance and mystery. Even in these later days, it is almost as virgin to speculation and enterprise as when the Gothic kings meditated its invasion.

One of the pillars of Hercules has held from five to six thousand restless British troops for nearly a century and a half; the other, Mount Abyle, whose shadow at sunrise reaches almost across the narrow strait, has never yet been trod by English foot. It is inhabited by a fierce race of Moors, who believe that their best chance of Paradise is to swim thither in Christian blood: they therefore never lose an opportunity of taking a shot at the Giaours, by whom, nevertheless, they are hospitably received at Gibraltar.

The Strait, through which the Atlantic pours into the Mediterranean at the rate of four or five miles an hour, is here about twelve miles wide. One would suppose that such a vast volume of water might create a very respectable ocean of its own in the course of a year or so: yet with this, assisted by all the rivers that pour in from the coasts of Africa, Asia, and Europe—to say nothing of the Black Sea, which flows in through the Bosphorus at about four miles an hour—the Mediterranean is not able to get up as much as an every-day tide. This unconscionable consumption of water, without any apparent result, has been accounted for by the great evaporation to which the sea is subject. No doubt those water-engines of nature, the clouds, require a large supply; and Africa cannot be irrigated, indifferently as it is done, for nothing: but a sum in the rule of three might prove that the Dead Sea would have been dried into a salt-pit in a few years after its creation, by the same ratio of comparative exhaustion and supply.

As we swept through the Straits we caught glimpses of Ceuta, Tangiers, and Tetuan, and then bore away for Cape de Gatta with a favouring breeze, and a brilliant moon lighting up the coast of Granada.

It is now three hundred and sixty years since the Moors were expelled from this fair land, through which they so long enlightened Europe with the wisdom of the East and the chivalry of the Desert. Under their rule its gardens smiled, its valleys waved with corn, its very rocks were wreathed with vines, and the Alhambra rose. But a bigotry and fanaticism fiercer than their own could not brook the happiness of a heretic people, and the banners of Ferdinand were unfurled:

"Red gleamed the cross and waned the crescent pale,
And Afric's echoes thrilled with Moorish matron's wail."

The Moors were banished; poverty and desolation came in their place; and even now, the Christian traveller only ventures among the misery-made robbers of Granada, in search of the remains of Moslem civilization.

It seemed a natural transition from the land of the Abencerrages, to that of Abdel Kadir, for which we were now steering. Europe sank with the sun below the horizon on our left; and, the following day but one, Africa rose with morning on our right.

The first view of the coast of Algiers is very peculiar and picturesque in shape and colouring. Steep purple hills, rising abruptly from the sea, and broken with dark ravines, are here brightened with little emerald lawns, and there gloomed over by the dark foliage of the palm and fig-tree. Villas, white as marble, speck the well-wooded parks along the shore; the snowy summits of Mount Atlas are cut clearly out against the bright blue sky above, and a line of sparkling foam runs along the borders of the bright blue sea below.

The city of Algiers, to the right as you enter, looks eastward over its beautiful bay: it is almost of a pyramidal form, very concentrated; and, with its flat and regular roofs, looks like a succession of white marble terraces, with here and there a swelling mosque dome, or a tapering minaret. This was the seat of Oriental luxury and art; but, when the greater robber drove out the lesser, its pleasant places were all defiled; the fountains were choked up, the porcelain floors were broken, the palm-trees cut down, and the gardens trampled into wildernesses. Richly did the land deserve a scourge, and never yet were found fitter ministers of wrath than those who visited it.

The French anchored in the bay in June, 1830, and landed their troops without resistance some miles to the westward of the city. All the previous attacks having been made by sea, this landing was wholly unexpected. Having thrown up some batteries commanding the town, and some entrance having been effected, the Dey capitulated, and the French entered Algiers on the 5th of July. Since then they have held it at the expense of 10,000 lives and about forty millions of francs annually; in return for which it does not pay one sou of revenue, and exhibits as much *colonial* appearance as a hollow square of infantry on the field of battle.

We showed our colours in passing, a compliment which the fort did not condescend to return, and then stood out to sea against a heavy gale of wind.*

* The reader will find some useful notices of Algiers in Wild's well-written "Narrative."

We must hurry past Tunis and desolate Carthage, but "not in silence past Calypso's isle."

The appearance of this little paradise is far more suitable to its former than its present destination. It contains all the beauties of a continent in miniature: little mountains with craggy summits, little valleys with cascades and rivers, lawny meadows and dark woods, trim gardens and tangled vineyards, silvery sands and craggy shores—all within a circuit of five or six miles. In *our* eyes it was still the enchanted island, and in *our* ears the faint sounds that came to us over the sunny sea were of shepherd's lute or woman's song; but a fat gentleman in green spectacles called it Pantellaria, and declared it was the Botany Bay of Naples!

One or two uninhabited little islands, that seem to have lost their way, speck the sea between this pleasant penal settlement and Gozo, a rival claimant for the doubtful honour of Calypso's isle. Narrow straits separate this from the adjoining rock, which represents the island of Malta.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MALTA.

Adieu to Malta—and adieu,
Triumphant sons of truest blue,
Whom every sea, and clime, and shore,
And fallen chiefs, and fleets no more,
And nightly smiles, and daily dinners,
Proclaim as war and woman's winners.

BYRON.

AFTER a couple of hours' coasting, we entered a watery ravine of battery-crowned cliffs, and came to an anchor in the Grand Harbour.

La Valetta is a sort of hybrid between a Spanish and an Eastern town; most of its streets are flights of steps, to which the verandahs are like gigantic banisters. Its terraced roofs restore to the cooped-up citizens all the ground lost by building upon; and there are probably not less than five hundred acres of promenadable roof in, or rather on, the city. The church of San Giovanni is very gorgeous, with its vaulted roof of gilded arabesque, its crimson tapestries, finely carved pulpits, and its floor, which seems one vast escutcheon. It is a mosaic of knightly tombs, on which their coats of arms are finely copied in coloured marble and precious stones. The chapel of the Madonna in the Eastern aisle is guarded by massive silver

Prince Puckler Muskau, a romancer without chivalry, has nevertheless given some amusing narrative and information on this subject: though the latter cannot be depended on, it may serve to direct inquiry.

rails, which were saved from French spoliation by being painted wood-colour. Amidst all this wealth and splendour, the proudest and most chivalric ornament of this church is a bunch of rusty old iron, suspended on the crimson tapestry. They are the keys of Rhodes, which the Order, overcome, but unconquered, carried away with them from their ancient seat, the bulwark of Christendom.

The hotels of the different nations (or Tongues, as they were called) are palaces that bear testimony to the taste and power of their former proprietors. The principal are the Auberges de Castile, de Provence, and the palace of the grand master, now that of the British governor. The others are converted into barracks; and probably the costumes of their olden time did not differ more from one another than those of its present military occupants—the dark green of the rifleman, the scarlet uniform of the 88th, and the varied garb of the Highlander, "all plaided and plumed in his tartan array." Every costume of Europe, Asia, and Africa, is to be met with in the streets, which swarm with the most motley and picturesque population. The brilliant sunshine gives an almost prismatic effect to every object, from the gorgeously clad Turk to the beautiful fish, streaked with every colour in the rainbow; quantities of fruit and vegetables are ranged on tables along the pavé; and roguish-looking little children persecute you with flowers.

The principal dress of the natives is a bright blue cotton shirt, with a coloured scarf round the waist, and a scarlet or blue cap hanging down behind, containing all their worldly goods. These last seemed to me to consist for the most part of a comb and a needle and thread. I speak of the poorer class, who generally sleep in the streets, and wear their clothes like their skins. They are a swarthy, stunted race, of very indifferent character, with great vivacity and intelligence in their glistening eyes.

The population in both town and country abounds in a proportion eight times as great as that of England.* Being very frugal and industrious, they are just able to keep themselves alive at present; but what is to become of them a few years hence, Sir Patrick Stuart and Malthus only know. The celibacy enjoined to the knights produced its usual licentious results; and the Order bequeathed its morals to the present inhabitants—a legacy which does not tend to diminish their numbers.

Many of the women are very beautiful, combining the gazelle eye of the East with the rich tresses of the North, and the statuesque profile of Greece and Italy. Their peculiar head-dress, the *onnella*, contributes not a little to the effect of their beauty. It is a black silk scarf, worn over the head like a veil, but gathered in on one side, so as not to eclipse the starry eyes which it seems always endeavouring to cloud over. The old aristocracy, proud and poor, form a society among themselves, to which the English are seldom admitted. Nothing can be more melancholy-looking than the high walled enclosures scattered over the island, in which they maintain their exclusiveness in not undignified poverty.

Valetta is the most warlike-looking town in the world; the glitter of uniforms is never out of your eyes, the blast of the bugle and the roll of the drum are never out of your ear. The citizens have their only walks upon ramparts, their drives along covered ways, and their very gardens are in the fosses; instead of curbstones there are old cannon; and, if you want to dismount, you tie your horse's bridle to an anchor. The Grand Harbour is crowded with stately ships of war, among which gaily painted boats, with high prows quaintly carved, are perpetually darting.

After visiting the handsome and well-furnished library and the armoury, I ascended one of the flat roofs, to obtain a view of the island. It is like a heap of limestones broken by the roadside for Macadamizing purposes, with here and there a bit of something green in their interstices; nevertheless, the islanders contrive to squeeze wine, and corn, and oil out of the sticks and stones that here represent the trees and fields of other countries. After taking a bird's-eye view of the rock, I rode to Citta Vecchia, to inspect that ancient seat of the Order, and the neighbouring catacombs. We passed over and through fortifications of extraordinary strength, to form which, excavations have been made in the solid rock that dwarf the boasted Catacombs of Rome. The pretty gardens of Florian partly shelter the open space between these and the outer line of fortifications.

Thence we passed through what would be the dreariest country I ever beheld but for the brilliant sunshine always smiling over it. Scarcely a particle of vegetation shaded the brown, burning rock. Almost all the soil upon the island has been brought from Sicily, and is retained in little trays or shelves of terraces, built up with dull grey stones. We rode by the side of a well-built aqueduct by which Valetta derives its supply of fresh water, except that which is caught and contained in tanks within the walls. In the suburbs of Citta Vecchia, we entered a

* 130,000 within a circuit of sixty miles.

church, where about a score of priests were chanting mass. At a beckon from our Maltese guide, one of them instantly abandoned his occupation, doffed his surplice, and accompanied us to the Catacombs: these are of considerable extent, and probably of Phœnician origin.

We groped our way with torches through long narrow passages, from which, on each side, opened crypts, hollowed out for the reception of the corpses. Some were made double, as if for the convenience of those who, even in death, would not be divided; some were cut into little cradles for dead children. Here and there were larger chambers with altars, and blood channels for sacrifice, or perhaps for washing the corpse. These corpses must have been embalmed, by the bye, or it would have been impossible for the living to *enter* this stifling labyrinth with their dead.

These Catacombs scarcely repay the trouble and disagreeability of their examination, particularly to those who have seen the Catacombs of Rome and Syracuse. The deserted city of Citta Vecchia is much more interesting, and is indeed, as far as I know, unique.

You pass along fortifications of great strength, without a stone displaced, and enter by a broken drawbridge into a stately but profoundly silent city. The houses are handsome, and in good repair, and seem to want only inhabitants to be homes once more. The palaces are magnificent, and appear the more imposing from the deep silence that invests their mysterious-looking walls. Grass and rank weeds are growing in the streets, which echo to your horse's hoofs; and the wind sighs among the lonely pillars and porticoes, with that wailing sound so peculiar to deserted places. The only living things I encountered within the precincts of this strange city were a friar and a pig, both walking there for an appetite, I presume, for there were no alms or food within its once crowded walls.

This was anciently the capital of the island, removed first to Vittoria, and finally to its present position by La Valetta, from whom it derives its name.

A little beyond Citta Vecchia is St. Paul's bay, which, notwithstanding the arguments (ill-founded, as it seems to me) of modern authors against Malta being the Melita of the apostle, retains the traditionary honour of which no pen and ink can now deprive it. On conversing with some of the natives as I rode shipwards, I found that they, like other people, had their good old times ("all times when old are good"), and these they consider to have been when the Order possessed their island. Being a people, they would of course fain exchange the present for their ancient or for any other government. They forget their degraded condition under the knights, which prevented any native from entering the Order (or even the city, without permission), which gave their daughters to be concubines to men who were as disdainful, as incapable of a lawful connection, and which vested arbitrary power in an oligarchy of strangers. If there is less foreign money* spent among them now, their taxation is far lighter. They have all the advantages of English laws as well as of their own; they sit on juries; are capable of serving in any department and have a native regiment paid by the British Government. Important as this island is as a naval station, it was perhaps fortunate for England that a less scrupulous nation took that advantage of the degeneracy of the Order and the imbecility of Hompesch which our ideas of justice might have forbidden.†

Malta is also important as the great quarantine station in the Mediterranean, and latterly it has become a place of considerable resort to invalids. For the latter it has many attractions, besides a cheerful climate, in which there is little variation of temperature, and an almost constant sea-breeze to temper the warm atmosphere. Asthma here breathes freely, and hectic consumption preserves its beauty, but foregoes its victim. Sea-bathing is continued through the winter. There are excellent horses, and many places of interest to visit, exclusive of Crendi and the Boschetto. There is an excellent garrison library, besides a very curious and interesting collection of books, belonging to the Knights of the Order. The armoury is not without interest, though much inferior to what we might expect, where all the new devices of armour were carried to perfection by steel-clad dandies who had little else to think of. In addition to these resources, there is an opera, very good yachting, sea-fishing, a little racing, very animated soldier society, a most hospitable and courteous governor, an excellent clergyman, skilful medical men, and, above all, means of leaving the island, almost daily,

* The revenues of the Order, in its palmy days, amounted to £3,000,000 sterling.

† "The surrender of Malta had been preconcerted with the French Knights of the Order before Buonaparte sailed from Toulon. When he stood upon its ramparts, Caffarelli observed to him, 'General, it was very lucky that there were people in the town to open the gates for us.' When we saw a small boat carry at her stern the Standard of the Order, sailing humbly beneath the ramparts on which it had once defied all the forces of the East, I thought I heard the ghosts of Lisle Adam and La Valette venting dismal lamentations; and fancied that I saw Time make to Philosophy the illustrious sacrifice of the most venerable of all illusions."—*Denon.*

for all the shores of this bright sea, which comprises every scene of paramount interest in the ancient world.*

## CHAPTER V.

### ALEXANDRIA.

Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day: yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes, it howls in thy empty courts.—OSSIAN.

TOWARDS evening, on the 18th day since leaving England, the low land of Egypt was visible from the mast-head. A heavy gale had been blowing ever since our departure from Malta, and, though a brilliant sun was shining, foam-clouds swept the decks, converted into rainbows as they passed. Not a sail appeared upon these lonely seas, that once swarmed with navies of war and commerce; the only object visible from the decks was a faint speck upon the horizon, but that speck was Pompey's Pillar.

In the time of the Pharaohs, the Egyptians displayed as much jealousy of the Phœnicians and other Mediterranean navigators, as the Celestial Empire has done in modern times with regard to "barbarians." Naucratis, at the Canopic mouth, was the Canton of Egypt in those days. Little business, however, seems to have been transacted there: the trade of the valley of the Nile looked only eastward; and Joseph received port-dues from Kosseir nearly 4000 years ago.

Alexander found a colony of Greeks settled at Racotis; his keen eye at once discovered, what we have only just found out, that this was in truth the seaport of all India. Dinocrates was commissioned to create a city, which the Macedonian invested with his name, and thus started into existence the haven of our search.

I stood upon the modern Pharos, and as my eyes wandered over Alexandria, to which the ancient city "has bequeathed nothing but its ruins and its name," I could observe few traces * of what it once had been—the emporium of the East, the seat of empire, the centre of learning and civilization. Though earth and sea remain unchanged, imagination can scarcely find a place for the ancient walls, fifteen miles in circumference; the vast streets, through the vista of whose marble porticoes the galleys on Lake Mareotis exchanged signals with those upon the sea; the magnificent temple of Serapis on its platform of one hundred steps; the four thousand palaces, and the stately homes of six hundred thousand inhabitants.

All that is now visible within the shrunken and mouldering walls is a piebald town: one half European, with its regular houses, tall, and white, and stiff; the other half oriental, with its mud-coloured buildings and terraced roofs, varied with fat mosques and lean minarets. The suburbs are encrusted with the wretched hovels of the Arab poor; and immense mounds and tracts of rubbish occupy the wide space between the city and its walls: all beyond is a dreary waste. Yet this is the site Alexander selected from his wide dominions, and which Napoleon pronounced to be unrivalled in importance. Here luxury and literature, the Epicurean and the Christian, philosophy and commerce, once dwelt together. Here stood the great library of antiquity, "the assembled souls of all that men held wise." Here the Hebrew Scriptures expanded into Greek under the hands of the Septuagint. Here Cleopatra, "vainqueur des vainqueurs du monde," revelled with her Roman conquerors. Here St. Mark preached the truth upon which Origen attempted to refine,† and here Athanasius held warlike controversy. Here Amru conquered, and here Abercrombie fell. Looking now along the shore, beneath me lies the harbour in the form of a crescent—the right horn occupied by the palace of the Pasha, his hareem, and a battery; the left, a long low sweep of land, alive with windmills, the city in the centre: to the westward, the flat, sandy shore stretches monotonously away to the horizon; to the eastward, the coast merges into Aboukir Bay.

Having taken this general view of our first Egyptian city, let us enter it in a regular manner to view it in detail. The bay is crowded

* Malta is about sixty miles in circumference, containing 130,000 inhabitants. It is composed principally of magnesian limestone, and, being cultivated with great labour, produces oranges, cotton, indigo, saffron, sugar, and large quantities of melons, grapes, and other fruit, in the soil of Sicily, which has been carried hither. Corn is grown in sufficient quantities to supply the island for six months: the rest is imported. Game is supplied by the little adjacent island of Comino. The population has nearly doubled since the island came into British occupancy. The revenue derived from the island is about £100,000, and the expenditure there about £88,000, exclusive, of course, of what the garrison and shipping expend. The Emperor Charles V. presented the island to the Knights Hospitallers when they were dispossessed of Rhodes.

* Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's Needle are mere exotics here; the former, having ventured on a pilgrimage, was kidnapped by Pompeios, a prefect, and pressed into the service of Diocletian or Adrian: the latter, with its fallen sister, was transplanted from Heliopolis, near Cairo.

† The results of Origen's preaching show strikingly the dangers of attempting to improve God's truth by man's wisdom. His followers divided themselves into two sects—*Origenists*, whose faith, though tinctured with gnosticism, was comparatively pure; and *Origenians*, whose doctrines the devil must have smiled at.

with merchant vessels of every nation, among which tower some very imposing-looking three-deckers, gigantic but dismantled; the red flag with the star and crescent flying from the peak. Men-of-war barges shoot past you with crews dressed in what look like red nightcaps and white petticoats. They rise to their feet at every stroke of the oar, and pull all out of time. Here an "ocean patriarch" (as the Arabs call Noah), with white turban and flowing beard, is steering a little ark filled with unclean-looking animals of every description; and there, a crew of swarthy Egyptians, naked from the waist upward, are pulling some pale-faced strangers to a vessel with loose topsails and blue-peter flying.

At length, amid a deafening din of voices and a pestilential effluvia from dead fish and living Arabs, you fight your way ashore; and if you had just awakened from a sleep of ages, you could scarcely open your eyes upon a scene more different from those you have just left. The crumbling quays are piled with bales of eastern merchandize, islanded in a sea of white turbans wreathed over dark, melancholy faces. Vivid eyes glitter strangely upon solemn-looking and bearded countenances. High above the variegated crowds peer the long necks of hopeless-looking camels. Wriggling and struggling amidst all this mass were picturesquely ragged little boys, dragging after them shaven donkeys with carpet saddles, upon one of which you suddenly find yourself seated without any volition of your own, and are soon galloping along filthy lanes, with blank, white, windowless and doorless walls on either side, and begin to wonder when you are to arrive at the Arab city. You have already passed through it, and are emerging into the Frank quarter, a handsome square of tall white houses, over which the flags of every nation in Europe denote the residences of the various consuls. In this square is an endless variety of races and costumes most picturesquely grouped together, and lighted brilliantly by a glowing sun in a cloudless sky. In one place, a drove of camels are kneeling down, with jet black slaves in white turbans, or crimson caps, arranging their burdens; in another, a procession of women waddles along, wrapped in large shroud-like veils from head to foot, with a long black bag, like an elephant's trunk, suspended from their foreheads, which permits only their kohl-stained eyes to appear. In another, a group of Turks in long flowing drapery are seated in a circle smoking their chibouques in silence, and enjoying society after the fashion of other gregarious animals; grooms with petticoat-trousers are leading horses with crimson velvet saddles, richly embroidered; a detachment of sad-looking soldiers in white cotton uniform is marching by to very wild music; and here and there a Frank with long moustaches is lounging about, contemplating these unconscious tableaux, which seem to have been got up for his amusement.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE NILE—ITS CREATION—ITS SOURCES—ITS IMPORTANCE — ITS INUNDATION — ITS STATISTICS—ITS BATTLE.

The Nile! the Nile! I hear its gathering roar,
No vision now, no dream of ancient years—
Throned on the rocks, amid the watery war,
The King of Floods, old Homer's Nile, appears,
With gentle smile, majestically sweet,
Curbing the billowy steeds that vex them at his feet.

LORD LINDSAY.

The spirit of our fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave.

CAMPBELL.

"EGYPT is the gift of the Nile," said one* who was bewildered by its antiquity before our history was born (at least he is called the father of it). A bountiful gift it was, that the "strange, mysterious, solitary stream" bore down in its bosom from the luxuriant tropics to the desert. For many an hour have I stood upon the city-crowning citadel of Cairo, and gazed unweariedly on the scene of matchless beauty and wonder that lay stretched beneath my view: cities and ruins of cities, palm-forests, and green savannahs, gardens, and palaces, and groves of olive. On one side, the boundless desert, with its pyramids; on the other, the land of Goshen, with its luxuriant plains, stretching far away to the horizon.

Yet this is an exotic land! That river, winding like a serpent through its paradise, has brought it from far regions, unknown to man. That strange and richly-varied panorama has had a long voyage of it! Those quiet plains have tumbled down the cataracts; those demure gardens have flirted with the Isle of Flowers,† five hundred miles away; and those very pyramids have floated down the waves of Nile. In short, to speak chemically, that river is a solution of Ethiopia's richest regions, and that vast country is merely a precipitate. At Pæstum‡ one sees the remnant of a city elaborated from mountain streams; the Temple of Neptune came down from the Calabrian Hills, by water: and the Forum, like Demosthenes, prepared itself for its tumult-scorning destiny

* Herodotus. † Elephantina.

‡ For an account of the formation of the travertine of which Pæstum was built, see Sir Humphrey Davy's "Last Days of a Philosopher."

among the dash of torrents, and the crash of rocks; but here we have a whole kingdom, risen, like Aphrodite, from the wave.

The sources of the Nile are as much involved in mystery as everything else connected with this strange country. The statue, under which it was represented, was carved out of black marble, to denote its Ethiopian origin, but crowned with thorns, to symbolize the difficulty of approaching its fountain head. It reposed appropriately on a sphinx, the type of enigmas, with dolphins and crocodiles disporting at its feet.

In early ages, "caput quærere Nili?" was equivalent to our expression of seeking the philosopher's stone, or interest on Pennsylvanian bonds. The pursuit has baffled the scrutiny and self-devotion of modern enterprise, as effectually as it did the inquisitiveness of ancient despots, and the theories of ancient philosophers. Alexander and Ptolemy sent expeditions in search of it. Herodotus gave it up; Pomponius Mela brought it from the Antipodes; Pliny from Mauritania, and Homer from heaven. This last theory, if not the most satisfactory, is, at least, the most incontrovertible, and sounds better than the Meadows of Geesh, where Bruce thought he had detected its infancy in the fountains of the Blue River. This was only a foundling, however — a mere tributary stream; the Naïads of the Nile are as virgin as ever. I have conversed with slave-dealers who were familiar with Abyssinia, as far as the Galla country, and still their information was bounded by the vague word, south—still from the south gushed the great river.

This much is certain, that from the junction of the Taccaze or Astaboras, the Nile runs a course of upwards of twelve hundred miles to the sea, without one tributary stream—"exemple," as Humboldt says, "unique dans l'histoire hydrographique du globe." During this career, it is exposed to the evaporation of a burning sun, drawn off into a thousand canals, absorbed by porous and thirsty banks, drunk by every living thing, from the crocodile to the pasha, from the papyrus to the palm-tree; and yet, strange to say, it seems to pour into the sea a wider stream than it displays between the cataracts a thousand miles away.

The Nile is all in all to the Egyptian: if it withheld its waters for a week, his country would become a desert; it waters and manures his fields, it supplies his harvests, and then carries off their produce to the sea for exportation: he drinks of it, he fishes in it, he travels on it: it *is* his slave, and used to be his god. Egyptian mythology recognized in it the Creative Principle, and, very poetically, engaged it in eternal war with the desert, under the name of Typhon, or the Destructive Principle. Divine honours were paid to this aqueous deity; and it is whispered among mythologists that the heart's-blood of a virgin was yearly added to its stream;—not unlikely, in a country where they worshipped crocodiles, and were anxious to consult their feelings.

The Arab looks upon all men as aliens who were not fortunate enough to be born beside the Nile; and the traveller is soon talked into a belief that it affords the most delicious water in the world. Shiploads of it are annually sent to Constantinople for the Sultan's hareem, where it is in great request, not only on epicurean, but anti-Malthusian grounds. The natives dignify their beloved river with the title of "El Bahr," the sea, and pass one-third of their lives in watching the flow, and the remainder in watching the ebb, of its mighty tide. The inundation begins in May, attains its full height in August, and thenceforth diminishes, until freshly swollen in the following year. The stream, economized within its channel as far as the first cataract, spreads abroad its beneficent deluge over the vast valley. Then it is that Egypt presents the most striking of its Protean aspects, becoming an archipelago, studded with green islands, and bounded only by the chain of the Libyan Hills and the purple range of the Mokattam Mountains. Every island is crowned with a village, or an antique temple, and shadowy with palm-trees, or acacia groves. Every city becomes a Venice, and the bazaars display their richest and gayest cloths and tapestries to the illuminations that are reflected from the streaming streets. The earth is sheltered from the burning sun under the cool bright veil of waters; the labour of the husbandman is suspended, and it is the season of universal festivity. Boatmen alone are busy, but it would seem to be pleasant business, for the sound of music is never silent beneath those large, white, wing-like sails, that now glitter in the moonlight, and now gleam ruddily, reflecting the fragrant watch-fires on the deck.

In one place you come upon a floating fair, held in boats, flushed with painted lanterns, and fluttering with gay flags. In another, a bridal procession is gliding by with mirth and music, as her friends convey some maiden, veiled and crowned with flowers, to her bridegroom. On one island you find a shawled and turbaned group of bearded men, smoking their chibouques and sipping coffee. On another, a merry band of Arab girls is dancing to the music of their own wild song: and then, perhaps, with the lotus flower "wreathed in the midnight of their hair," or the light garment, that scarce con-

cealed their graceful forms, folded as a turban, they swim from grove to grove, the quiet lake scarcely rippling round their dark bosoms.

Great part of this picture is of rare occurrence, however—the inundation seldom rising to a height greater than what is necessary for purposes of irrigation, and presenting, alas! rather the appearance of a swamp than of an archipelago.

As the waters retire, vegetation seems to exude from every pore. Previous to its bath, the country, like Pelias, looked shrivelled, and faded, and worn out: a few days after it, old Egypt looks as good as new, wrapped in a richly green mantle embroidered with flowers. As the Nile has everything his own way throughout his wide domains, he is capricious in proportion, and gives spring in October, and autumn in February. Another curious freak of his is to make his bed in the highest part of the great valley through which he runs: this bed is a sort of savings-bank, by means of which the deposits of four thousand years have enabled it to rise in the world, and to run along a causeway of its own.

This sloping away of the surface of the valley from the river's edge materially facilitates the irrigation of the country, in which 50,000 oxen, and at least double that number of men, are perpetually employed. As I shall have frequent occasions to return to the Nile, in speaking of the commerce, the agriculture, and the mode of travelling in Egypt, I shall only add here the following statistics from the report of M. Linant, the pasha's chief engineer. At low water it pours into the sea, by the Rosetta mouth, 79,532,551,728 —by the Damietta, 71,033,840,640 cubic metres, in every twenty-four hours, making a total of 150,566,392,368. At high water, by the Rosetta branch, 478,317,838,960 — by the Damietta, 227,196,828,480 — total, 705,514,667,440. The elevation of its waters below the first cataract, *i.e.*, 250 leagues from its embouchure, is 543 French feet above the level of the Mediterranean: it runs at the rate of about three miles an hour during its flood, and two during its low water. The deposit of the river, of which the country is composed, yields by analysis three-fifths of alumina, one-fifth of carbonate of lime, one-twentieth of oxide of iron (which communicates the reddish colour to its waters), some carbonate of magnesia, and pure silex. The mean rate of accumulated soil seems to be about four inches in a century in Lower Egypt; and about forty feet depth of soil has thus been flung over the desert since the deluge. In the time of Mœris, the lands were sufficiently watered if the Nile rose to the height of eight cubits; in the time of Herodotus, it required fifteen cubits; and now the river must rise to the height of twenty-two before the whole country is overflowed. Still, as the deposits increase the Delta, the river is proportionately dammed up, and thus the great watering-machine is kept in order by Nature, with a little assistance from Mehemet Ali.

Formerly, when vexed by the armaments of a Sesostris or the priestly pageants of a Pharaoh, the Nile required seven mouths to vent its murmurs to the sea. In modern times, it finds two sufficient: Damietta, of crusading memory, presides over one, and Rosetta, in Arabic, "el Rashid," the birthplace of our old friend Haroun, takes advantage of the other. The former is waited upon by Lake Menzaleh, where alone the real ibis and the papyrus are now found—the latter looks eastward on Lake Bourlos, and westward over Aboukir Bay, of glorious memory.

'Tis an old story now, that Battle of the Nile; but as the traveller paces by these silent and deserted shores that have twice seen England's flag "triumphant over wave and war," he lives again in the stirring days when the scenery before him was the arena where France and England contended for the empire of the East. Let us rest from blazing sun and weary travel in the cool shadow of this palm-tree. Our camels are kneeling round us, and our Arabs light their little fires in silence. *They* remember well the scenes we are recalling, though many a Briton has forgotten them; and the names of Nelson and of Abercrombie are already sounding faint through the long vista of departed times. We overlook the scene of both their battles, and envy not the Spartan his Thermopylæ, or the Athenian his Salamis. What Greece was to the Persian despot, England was to Napoleon; nation after nation shrank from staking its existence at issue for a mere principle, and England alone was at war with the congregated world, in defence of that world's freedom. Yet not quite alone: she had one faithful ally in the cause of liberty and Christianity, and that ally was —the Turk!

The Bay is wide, but dangerous from shoals; the line of deep blue water, and the old castle of Aboukir, map out the position of the French fleet on the 1st of August, '98. Having landed Buonaparte and his army, Brueys lay moored in the form of a crescent, close along the shore. His vastly superior force,* and the strength of his position (protected towards the northward by dangerous shoals, and towards the westward by the castle and batteries), made him consider that position impregnable. He wrote, on the strength of this conviction, to Paris, to say that Nelson purposely avoided

* Nearly as three to two.

him. Was he undeceived when Hood, in the Zealous, making signal that the enemy was in sight, a cheer of anticipated triumph burst from every ship in the British fleet—that fleet which had swept the seas with bursting sails for six long weeks in search of its formidable foe, and now pressed to the battle as eagerly as if nothing but a rich and easy prize awaited them?

Nelson had long been sailing in battle order, and he now only lay-to in the offing till the rearward ships should come up. The soundings of that dangerous Bay were unknown to him, but he knew that, where there was room for a Frenchman to lie at anchor, there must be room for an English ship to lie alongside of him, and the closer the better. As his proud and fearless fleet came on, he hailed Hood, to ask his opinion as to whether he thought it would be advisable to commence the attack that night; and receiving the answer that he longed for, the signal for "close battle" flew from his mast-head.

The delay thus caused to the Zealous gave Foley the lead, who showed the example of leading *inside* the enemy's line, and anchored by the stern alongside the second ship, thus leaving to Hood the first. The latter exclaimed to my informant, "Thank God, he has generously left to his old friend still to lead the van." Slowly and majestically, as the evening fell, the remainder of the fleet came on beneath a cloud of sail, receiving the fire of the castle and the batteries in portentous silence, only broken by the crash of spars and the boatswain's whistle, as each ship furled her sails calmly, as a sea-bird might fold its wings, and glided tranquilly onward till she found her destined foe. Then her anchor dropped astern, and her fire burst from her bloody decks with a vehemence that showed how sternly it had been repressed till then.

The leading ships passed between the enemy and the shore; but, when the admiral came up, he led the remainder of the fleet along the seaward side, thus doubling on the Frenchman's line, and placing it in a defile of fire. The sun went down soon after Nelson anchored; and his rearward ships were only guided through the darkness and the dangers of that formidable Bay by the Frenchman's fire flashing fierce welcome as each enemy arrived, and hovered along the line, coolly scrutinizing, where he could draw most of that fire on himself. The Bellerophon, with gallant recklessness, fastened on the gigantic Orient, and was soon crushed and scorched into a wreck by the terrible artillery of batteries more than double the number of her own. But before she drifted helplessly to leeward, *she had done her work:* the French admiral's ship was on fire, and through the roar of battle a whisper went that for a moment paralyzed every eager heart and hand. During that dread pause the fight was suspended, the very wounded ceased to groan—yet the burning ship continued to fire broadsides from her flaming decks, her gallant crew alone unawed by their approaching fate, and shouting their own brave requiem. At length, with the concentrated roar of a thousand battles, the explosion came; and the column of flame that shot upward into the very sky for a moment rendered visible the whole surrounding scene, from the red flags aloft to the reddened decks below—the wide shore, with all its swarthy crowds, and the far-off glittering sea, with the torn and dismantled fleets. Then darkness and silence came again, only broken by the shower of blazing fragments in which that brave ship fell upon the waters.

Till that moment, Nelson was ignorant how the battle went. He knew that every man was doing his duty, but he knew not how successfully; he had been wounded in the forehead, and found his way unnoticed to the deck in the suspense of the coming explosion. Its light was a fitting lamp for eye like his to read by. He saw his own proud flag still floating everywhere; and at the same moment his crew recognized their wounded chief. The wild cheer with which they welcomed him was drowned in the renewed roar of the artillery, and the fight continued until near the dawn.

Morning rose upon an altered scene. The sun had set upon as proud a fleet as ever sailed from the gay shores of France: torn and blackened hulls now only marked the position they had then occupied; and where their admiral's ship *had* been, the blank sea sparkled in the sunshine. Two ships of the line and two frigates escaped, to be captured soon afterwards; but within the Bay the tricolor was flying on board the Tonnant alone. As the Theseus approached to attack her, attempting to capitulate, she hoisted a flag of truce. "Your battle-flag or none," was the stern reply, as her enemy rounded-to, and the matches glimmered over her line of guns. Slowly and reluctantly, like an expiring hope, that pale flag fluttered down from her lofty spars, and the next that floated there was the banner of Old England.

And now the battle was over—India was saved upon the shores of Egypt—the career of Buonaparte was checked,* and the navy

* "Le principal but de l'expédition des Français d'Orient, était d'abaisser la puissance Anglaise. C'est du Nil que devait partir l'armée qui allait donner de nouvelles destinées aux Indes. . . . Les Français une fois maîtres des ports de Corfou, de Malte et d'Alexandrie, la Méditerranée devenait un lac Français."—*Mémoires de Napoleon.*

of France was annihilated, though restored, seven years later, to perish utterly at Trafalgar, a fitting hecatomb for obsequies like those of Nelson, whose life seemed to terminate as his mission was then and thus accomplished.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MAHMOUDIEH CANAL—BATTLE OF ABOUKIR—ATFÉH.

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
Of scourge-driv'n labour, or the one deep cry
Of people perishing—then thinketh, "I have found
New waters, but I die.

*Anon.*

The blue steel bit, through helmet split,
And red the harness painted;
The virgins long lamented it,
But the dogs were well contented
With the slaughter of that day.

*Scandinavian Rune.*

Arrived at Alexandria, the traveller is yet far distant from the Nile. The Canopic mouth is long since closed up by the mud of Æthiopia, and the Arab conquerors of Egypt were obliged to form a canal to connect this seaport with the river. Under the Mamelukes, this canal had also become choked up, and her communication with the great vivifying stream thus ceasing, Alexandria languished — while Rosetta, like a vampire, fed on her decay, and, notwithstanding her shallow waters, swelled suddenly to importance.

When Mehemet Ali rose to power, his clear intellect at once comprehended the importance of the ancient emporium. Alexandria was then become a mere harbour for pirates—the desert and the sea were gradually encroaching on its boundaries—but the Pasha ordered the desert to bring forth corn, and the sea to retire, and the mandate of this Albanian Canute was no idle word—it acted like an incantation to the old Egyptian spirit of great works. Up rose a stately city, containing 60,000 inhabitants, and as suddenly yawned the canal, which was to connect the new city with the Nile, and enable it to fulfil its destinies of becoming the emporium of three quarters of the globe.

In the greatness and the cruelty of its accomplishment, this canal may vie with the gigantic labours of the Pharaohs. 250,000 people, men, women, and children, were swept from the villages of the Delta, and heaped like a ridge along the destined banks of that fatal canal. They had only provisions for one month, and implements they had few, or none: but the Pasha's command was urgent—the men worked with all the energy of despair, and stabbed into the ground as if it was their enemy; children carried away the soil in little handfuls; nursing mothers laid their infants on the shelterless banks; the scourge kept them to the work, and mingled blood with their milk, if they attempted to nourish their offspring. Famine soon made its appearance, and they say it was a fearful sight to see that great multitude convulsively working against time. As a dying horse bites the ground in his agony, they tore up that great grave—25,000 people perished, but the grim contract was completed, and in six weeks the waters of the Nile were led to Alexandria.

The canal is forty-eight miles in length, ninety feet in breadth, and eighteen in depth; it was finished altogether in ten months, with the exception of the lock, which should have connected it with the river; the bey who had charge of this department lost his contract—and his head.

We embarked in a boat, not unlike those that ply in Ireland upon the Grand Canal, and, to say the truth, among the dreary wastes of swamp that surrounded us, we might also have fancied ourselves in the midst of the Bog of Allen. The boat was towed by four wild, scraggy-looking horses, ridden by four wilder, scraggier-looking men; their naked feet were stuck in shovel stirrups, with the sharp sides of which they scored their horses' flanks, after the fashion of crimped cod. It is true, these jockeys wore tattered turbans instead of tattered hats, and loose blue gowns instead of grey frieze. Yet, still there was something very disillusionizing in the whole turn-out, and the mud cabins that here and there encrusted the banks did not tend to obliterate Tipperary associations. But—hold! there is a palm-tree, refreshing to the cockney's eye; an ostrich (though a tame one) is trotting along the towing-path; from a patch of firm ground a camel rears its melancholy head; and, by Jove! there goes a pelican!

We pass, for some miles, along a causeway that separates the salt-water Lake Madee from Lake Mareotis.

Nothing can be more desolate than the aspects of these two lonely lakes, stretching, with their low swampy shores, away to the horizon. If Alastor, or the spirit of solitude, was fond of yachting, these waters would be the very place for him to cruise in undisturbed, except by the myriads of wild fowl, that kept wheeling, shrieking, and whistling round us. These lakes seem to have been born for one another; but the Pharaohs, like poor-law guardians, saw fit to separate them. Their object, however, the reverse of the said poor-law, was to make Mareotis fruitful. A vast mound was raised, which kept the salt lake at a respectful distance; and, until the English invasion in 1801, or at least until the

sixteenth century, the greater part of Mareotis was a fertile plain.

Buonaparte, after having defeated the Mamelukes at the Pyramids, had taken possession of Cairo. Having denied Christ in Europe, he acknowledged Mahomet in Asia; having butchered his prisoners at Jaffa, he was defeated by the Butcher* Pasha and Sir Sydney Smith, at Acre; having poisoned part of that army whom he called his children, he started for Paris, and left the remainder to encounter alone those

"Storms that might veil his fame's ascending star." †

That remainder occupied Cairo, under the gallant and ill-fated Kleber. He had accepted, and was preparing to act upon, terms of capitulation from the Turks, which Lord Keith had, however, refused to ratify. The moment Sir Sydney Smith learned the English admiral's determination, he took upon himself to inform Kleber of the fact, and to advise him to hold his position. The Turks exclaimed against this chivalrous notice as a treachery, and there were not a few found in England to echo the same cry; but the spirit which dictated the British sailor's act was understood in the deserts—a voice went forth among the tents of the Bedouin and the palaces of the despot, that England preferred honour to advantage. Battles, since then, have been fought, and been forgotten—nations have come and gone, and left no trace behind them—but the memory of that noble truthfulness remained, and expanded into a national characteristic; and our countrymen may, at this hour, in the streets of Cairo, hear the Arabs swear "by the honour of an Englishman."

Kleber was assassinated by a fanatic, instigated by those priests whose faith he had offered to profess. The incapable Menon succeeded to the command.

Abercrombie anchored in Aboukir Bay on the 2nd of March, 1801, but was prevented from disembarking, by a continued gale of wind, until the 8th.

Soon after midnight, a rocket from the admiral's ship gave the signal for landing, and the boats, crowded with 6,000 troops, formed in such order as they could maintain on the yet stormy sea. Then, through the clear silence of the night, the order was given to advance, and the deep murmur of a thousand oars made answer to the cheer that urged them on. It was morning before they approached the shore, which blazed with the fire of the French troops and their protecting batteries; but on they went, reckless as the breeze that wafted them, till the boats took ground, and then they leapt upon the bayonets of the French advancing through the surf to meet them. The foam soon changed its colour as they fought among the very waves, but nothing could stand the British onset long. The 23rd, and the flank companies of the 40th, drove the enemy before them, and received and broke a charge of cavalry with the bayonet. The sailors, harnessing themselves to the field artillery, dragged it through the heavy sands under the fire of the French batteries, to whose roar they replied with loud and triumphant cheers. The British troops rushed on to the mouths of the enemy's cannon, swept the artillerymen from their posts, carried the batteries with the bayonet, and stood conquerors on the Egyptian shore.

On the 13th, a sanguinary engagement took place, without any result of importance. On the 21st, the English occupied a line extending from the spot we are now sailing over, to where the sea glistens yonder, about a mile away. Their right flank was covered by a flotilla of gun-boats, under Sir Sydney Smith—the left, by redoubts. The French had partly restored the ancient lines of circumvallation, near Alexandria, which Sir Ralph Abercrombie was preparing to storm, when the enemy's confidence and impetuosity induced him to abandon his strong position, and advance to meet the British in yonder plain, where a few palm-trees still mark the ground they occupied. I need not tell the results of that glorious day. The 42nd Highlanders and the gallant 28th regiment there won the proud name which they have since borne stainless through many a bloody field. The seamen there fought side by side in generous rivalry with the soldier: in a word, there Abercrombie conquered, and there Abercrombie fell:

"Sweet in manner, fair in favour,
Mild in temper, fierce in fight;
Warrior nobler, gentler, braver,
Never shall behold the light."

The command devolved upon Lord Hutchinson, a worthy successor of his gallant friend. The powerfully written, manly, and feeling despatch, in which he announced the victory of Aboukir, and the death of Abercrombie, is, perhaps, as fine a composition as our military records can supply. On the arrival of Sir David Baird from India by Cosseir and the Nile, Lord Hutchinson advanced upon Alexandria, which capitulated, and soon afterwards Egypt was abandoned, both by conquered and conquerors, to the Moslem. It was in this last advance that the embankment was cut by the British army. Six dykes were opened, the intermediate banks soon gave way, and the sea

* Djezzer, Arabic for "butcher."
† Sir J. Hanmer.

burst freely in to Lake Mareotis, submerging forty Arab villages with their cultivated lands. It was seventy days before the cataract subsided into a strait. The sea is now once more banked out by the causeway on which the Mahmoudieh canal is carried to Alexandria, and Mehemet Ali intends to drain the lake, and again to restore it to cultivation; but it will take many years to repair the ruin which a few hours were sufficient to effect.

Gentle reader, we have done with war—and if you should add, "time for us," I can only say, that I felt bound to account for this unpleasant-looking lake, on whose banks I have so long detained you; and, more truly, that I was fain to add my pebble to the cairn upon Abercrombie's grave.

It was midnight when we arrived at Atféh, the point of junction with the Nile; and a regular African storm, dark and savage, was howling among the mud-built houses when we disembarked there, ankle-deep in slime. A crowd of half-naked, swarthy Arabs, with flaring torches, looked as if they were Pluto's police ready to escort us to the realms of darkness, jabbering and shouting violently, in chorus with the barking of the wild dogs, the roaring of the wind, and the growling of the camels, as a hail-storm of boxes and portmanteaus was showered on their backs: donkeys were braying, women shrieking, Englishmen cursing sonorously, and the lurid moon, as she hurried through the clouds, seemed a torch waved by some fury, to light up this scene of infernal confusion.

My friend and I fought our way through the demon crowd, gave some of the ban-dogs reason for their howling, and, losing our way in an enclosure, stumbled over one of the only two pigs in the land of Ham. These unclean animals are kept by a Frenchman, who magnanimously prefers pork to popularity, and is about to establish an hotel in this most diabolical village it has ever been my lot to enter. Marvelling whether we should ever be restored to any of our luggage, we groped our way through sleeping Arabs and kneeling camels, and found, to our pleased amazement, that our baggage, which appeared to scatter as widely and as suddenly as a burst rocket, was piled upon the deck uninjured, and our big-breeched servants were smoking on pyramids of portmanteaus as apathetically as two sphinxes.

We are now upon the sacred river—but it is too dark to see its waters gleam, and the shrieking of the steamer prevents us from hearing its waters flow. Alas!—What a paragraph! And, is it possible, ye Naïads of the Nile, that your deified stream is to be harrowed up by a greasy, grunting steamship, like the parvenue rivers of vulgar Europe? That stream—that, gushing from beyond the emerald mountains, scatters gold around it in its youth—that has borne the kings of India to worship at ancient Meröe—that has murmured beneath the cradle of Moses, and foamed round the golden prow of Cleopatra's barge! Unhappy river! Thou, who like Ixion, in thy warm youth, hast loved the gorgeous clouds of Æthiopia, must thou now expiate thy raptures on the wheel? Yes! for thy old days of glory are gone by; thy veil of mystery is rent away, and with many another sacrificial victim of the ideal to the practical, thou must, forsooth, become useful and respectable, and convey cockneys. They call thy steamy torturer the Lotus, too—adding insult to deep injury; a pretty specimen of thy sacred flower, begrimed with soot, and bearing fifty tons of Newcastle coal in its calyx!

We were soon fizzing merrily up the stream; and after a night spent upon the hard boards in convulsive efforts to sleep, that were more fatiguing than a fox hunt, we hurried on deck to see the sun shine over this renowned river. Must I confess it? We could see nothing but high banks of dark mud, or swamps of festering slime; even the dead buffalo, that lay rotting on the river's edge, with a pretty sprinkling of goitrous-looking vultures, scarcely repaid one for leaving Europe. In some hours, however, we emerged * from the Rosetta branch, on which we had hitherto been boiling our way to the great river, and henceforth the prospect began to improve. Villages sheltered by graceful groups of palm-trees, mosques, santon's tombs, green plains, and at length the desert—the most imposing sight in the world, except the sea. The day passed slowly; the view had little variety; the wild fowl had ascertained the range of an English fowling-piece; the dinner was as cold as the climate would permit; the plates had no knives and forks, and an interesting-looking lady had a drum-stick between her teeth, as I pointed out to her the scene of the battle of the Pyramids, which now rose upon our view. That sight restored us to good humour; we felt we were actually in Egypt; the Bog of Allen, the canal-boat, the cockney steamer itself, failed to counteract the effect produced upon us by those man-made mountains, girt round with forests of palm-trees. As the sun and the champagne went down, our spirits rose; and, by the time the evening and the mist had rendered the country in-

* The Delta is seldom visited by travellers, who hurry over the less interesting objects on their arrival, and are pretty well tired of Egypt on their return. Nevertheless, many ruins, and some boar-shooting, will well repay antiquaries and sportsmen in their respective vocations.

visible, we had persuaded ourselves that Egypt was indeed the lovely land that Moore has so delightfully imagined in the pages of the "Epicurean."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CAIRO—ITS PORT—VIEW FROM WITHOUT—WITHIN—THE CITADEL.

> While far as sight can reach, beneath as clear
> And blue a heaven as ever blessed this sphere,
> Gardens, and minarets, and glittering domes,
> And high-built temples, fit to be the homes
> Of mighty gods, and pyramids whose hour
> Outlasts all time, above the waters tower.
>
> MOORE.

MORNING found us anchored off Boulac, the port of Cairo. Toward the river it is faced by factories and storehouses; within, you find yourself in a labyrinth of brown narrow streets, [that resemble rather rifts in some mud mountain than anything with which architecture has had to do. Yet here and there the blankness of the walls is broken and varied by richly worked lattices, and specimens of arabesque masonry. Gaudy bazaars strike the eye and relieve the gloom, and the picturesque population that swarms everywhere keeps the interest awake.

On emerging from the lanes of Boulac, Cairo, Grand Cairo! opens on the view; and never yet did fancy flash upon the poet's eye a more superb illusion of power and beauty than the "city of Victory" * presents from a distance. The bold range of the Mokattam mountains is purpled by the rising sun, its craggy summits are cut clearly out against the glowing sky, it runs like a promontory into a sea of the richest verdure, here wavy with a breezy plantation of olives, there darkened with acacia groves. Just where the mountain sinks upon the plain, the citadel stands upon its last eminence; and, widely spread beneath it, lies the city, a forest of minarets with palm-trees intermingled, and the domes of innumerable mosques rising like enormous bubbles over the sea of houses. Here and there, richly green gardens are islanded within that sea, and the whole is girt round with picturesque towers and ramparts, occasionally revealed through vistas of the wood of sycamores and fig-trees that surround it. It has been said that "God the first garden made, and the first city, Cain," but here they seem commingled with the happiest effect.

The approach to Cairo is a spacious avenue lined with the olive or the sycamore; here and there the white marble of a fountain gleams through the foliage, or a palm-tree waves its plumy head above the santon's tomb. Along this highway a masquerading-looking crowd is swarming towards the city; ladies wrapped closely in white veils, women of the lower class carrying water on their heads, and covered only with a long blue garment, that reveals too plainly an exquisite symmetry in the young, and a hideous deformity in the elders; there are camels perched upon by black slaves, magpied with white napkins round their head and loins; there are portly merchants, with turbans and long pipes, gravely smoking on their knowing-looking donkeys: here an Arab dashes through the crowd at full gallop, or a European, still more haughtily, shoves aside the pompous-looking, bearded throng. Water-carriers, calenders, Armenians, barbers, all the *dramatis personæ* of the Arabian Nights, are there.

And now we reach the city wall, with its towers as strong as mud can make them. It must not be supposed that this mud architecture is of the same nature as one associates with the word in Europe. No! overshadowed by palm-trees, and a crimson banner with its star and crescent waving from the battlements, and camels couched beneath its shade, and swarthy Egyptians, in gorgeous apparel, leaning against it, make a mud wall appear a very respectable fortification in this land of illusion.

And now we are within the city! Protean powers! what a change! A labyrinth of dark, filthy, intricate lanes and alleys, in which every smell and sight, from which the nose and eye revolt, meet one at every turn, and one is always turning. The stateliest streets are not above twelve feet wide; and as the upper stories arch over them toward one another, only a narrow serpentine seam of blue sky appears between the toppling verandahs of the winding streets. Occasionally a string of camels, bristling with faggots of firewood, sweeps the streets as effectually of passengers as the machine which has superseded chummies does a chimney of its soot. Lean, mangy dogs are continually running between your legs, which afford a tempting passage in this petticoated place; beggars in rags, quivering with vermin, are lying in every corner of the street; now a bridal, or a circumcising procession, squeezes along, with music that might madden a drummer; now the running footmen of some bey or pasha endeavour to jostle you towards the wall, unless they recognize you as an Englishman,—one of that race whom they think the devil can't frighten, or teach manners to.

Notwithstanding all these annoyances,

* "El Kahira," the Arabic epithet of this city, means "the Victorious;" whence our word Cairo: in Arabic "Misr."

however, the streets of Cairo present a source of unceasing amusement and curiosity to the stranger. It has not so purely an oriental character as Damascus, but the intermixture of Europeans gives it a character of its own, and affords far wider scope for adventure than the secluded and solemn capital of Syria. The bazaars are very vivid and varied, and each is devoted to a peculiar class of commodities: thus you have the Turkish, the Persian, the Frank bazaars; the armourers', the weavers', the jewellers' quarters. These bazaars are, for the most part, covered in, and there is a cool and quiet gloom about them which is very refreshing; there is also an air of profound repose in the turbaned merchants as they sit cross-legged on their counters, embowered by the shawls and silks of India and Persia; they look as if they were for ever sitting for their portraits, and seldom move a muscle, unless it be to breathe a cloud of smoke from their bearded lips, or to turn their vivid eyes upon some expected customer—those eyes that seem to be the only living part of their countenance. These bazaars have each a ponderous chain hung across their entrance, to prevent the precipitate departure of any thief that may presume too far upon the listlessness of the shopkeeper: each lane and alley is also terminated by a door, which is guarded at night. In passing along these narrow lanes, you might suppose yourself in a gallery or corridor, until you meet a file of donkeys, or of soldiers staggering along their slippery paths.

If you make a purchase of any value, your merchant will probably offer you a pipe, and make room for you to seat yourself on his counter. If you are sufficiently a *citoyen du monde* to accept the hospitality, you will be repaid by a very pleased look on the part of your host, and a pipe of such tobacco as only these squatters of the East can procure. The curious and varied drama of oriental life is acted before you, as you tranquilly puff away, and add to the almost imperceptible yet fragrant cloud that fills the bazaar. Now, by your host's order, a little slave presents you with a tiny cup of rich coffee, and you raise your hand to your head as you accept it; your entertainer repeats the gesture, and mutters a prayer for your health.

Let us purchase an embroidered vest, or a silk scarf from the venerable Abou Habib, for the sake of his snow-white beard and turban. He makes a movement, as if to rise, of which there is as little chance as of the sun doing so at midnight; he points to the carpet on which he "hopes to Allah that your beneficent shadow may fall." You ascend his counter, and sit down in the place and attitude of a tailor with perfect gravity. Your dragoman lounges at the door to explain the sights that pass in the streets, or the sounds that issue from the lips of your entertainer. Conversation is not considered a necessary part of a visit, or of agreeability; and if you will only stay quiet, and look pleased, you may pass for a very polished person. You have, therefore, full leisure for observation, while you are enjoying society *à l'orientale*.

In the absence of any claim on our ears, let us use our eyes and look about us. A house is being rebuilt nearly opposite; masons in turbans and long blue chemises, and red slippers down at the heel, are engaged, as if in pantomime, with much gesticulation, but little effect. A score of children are carrying bricks and mortar in little handfuls, chanting a measured song, as if to delude themselves into the idea that they are at play. Now, a durweesh, naked except for a napkin, or a bit of sheepskin round his loins, presents himself, claiming alms as if it were a privilege on your part to offer them. Their wild, fierce eyes, in which the gleaming of insanity conveys their title to *your* forbearance, and to the Moslems' reverence—their long, matted, filthy hair, falling over their naked, sun-scorched shoulders—their savage gluttony—proclaim them something between a friar and a saint of Islam. Here is a water-carrier with his jar of cool sherbet, adorned with fresh flowers. He tinkles little brazen saucers to announce his progress, and receives half a farthing for each draught. There is a beggar devouring his crust, but religiously leaving a portion of it in some clean spot for the wild dogs. Now an old man stoops to pick up a piece of paper, and to put it by, "lest," says he, "the name of God be written on it, and it be defiled." Here is a lady of some hareem, mounted *à la Turc* on her donkey, and attended by her own slave, and her husband's eunuch; she is a mere bundle of linen, though a pair of brilliant eyes relieve her somewhat ghastly appearance, which would figure excellently well in a tableau as a Banshee.

All these, and a thousand other quaint personages, are perpetually passing and repassing, with hand upon the heart as they meet an acquaintance, or on the head if they meet a superior. But it is time to return Abou Habib's richly-mounted pipe, to lay our hands upon *our* heart, and to pursue our researches through the city.

Mean-looking and crowded as is the greater part of Cairo, there are some extensive squares and stately houses. Among the former is the Esbekeyeh, by which you enter the city, a place perhaps four times as large as Lincoln's Inn Fields, occupied by a large

plantation, divided by straight avenues, and surrounded by a dirty canal. A wide road, shaded by palm and sycamore trees, runs round this canal, and forms a street of tall mud-coloured houses of very various architecture, some of which, the verandahs particularly, are very delicately and elaborately worked. The best buildings in the Esbekeyeh are the palaces of Ibrahim and Abbas Pasha, and the new hotel D'Orient, in which we had pleasant apartments — looking over a cemetery, it is true, which was haunted by tribes of ghoul-like dogs. But beyond this were gardens, and Kiosks, and palm-groves, and a glimpse of the Nile, and, above all, the Pyramids, far in the distance, yet by their magnitude curiously confounding the perspective. Another wide space is the Roumeleyeh, where fairs and markets are held, and criminals are executed, and other popular amusements take place. The most interesting building in Cairo is undoubtedly the citadel, which, as I have before observed, overlooks the town. Mehemet Ali resides in it when he is in town. Here are the remains of Saladin's palace, and the commencement of a magnificent mosque, from the terraced roof of which there is perhaps the finest view in the world. All Lower Egypt lies spread out, as in a map, before you, one great emerald set in the golden desert, bossed with mountains that surround it.

There is in this citadel a place of great interest to antiquarian cockneys, because it is called Joseph's Well, although owing its origin to the Saracen*—not the patriarch; and also a respectable armoury of native workmanship, a printing-press, and a mint, which coins annually about £200,000 sterling in gold. This citadel was built by Saladin, and was very strong from its position, before gunpowder gave the command of it to a height further up on the Mokattam height.

To me, the most interesting spot within these crime-stained precincts was that where the last of the Mamelukes escaped from the bloody treachery of Mehemet Ali. Soon after the Pasha was confirmed by the Porte in the viceroyalty of Egypt, he summoned the Mameluke beys to a consultation on the approaching war against the Wahabees in Arabia. As his son Toussoun had been invested with the dignity of pasha of the second order, the occasion was one of festivity as well as business. The beys came mounted on their finest horses, in magnificent uniforms, forming the most superb cavalry in the world. After a very flattering reception from the Pasha, they were requested to parade in the court of the citadel. They entered the fortification unsuspectingly, and the portcullis fell behind the last of the proud procession. A moment's glance revealed to them their doom. They dashed forwards—in vain!—before and around them, nothing was visible but blank, pitiless walls and barred windows, and the only opening was towards the bright blue sky; even that was soon darkened by their funeral pall of smoke, as volley after volley flashed from a thousand muskets within the ramparts upon their defenceless and devoted band. Startling and fearfully sudden as was the death, they met it as became their fearless character—some with arms crossed upon their mailed bosoms, and their turbaned heads devoutly bowed in prayer; some with flashing swords and fierce curses, alike unavailing against their dastard and ruthless foe. All that chivalrous and splendid throng, save one, sank rapidly, beneath the deadly fire into a red and writhing mass—that one was Emim Bey. He spurred his charger over a heap of his slaughtered comrades, and sprang upon the battlements. It was a dizzy height, but the next moment he was in the air—another, and he was disengaging himself from his crushed and dying horse amid a shower of bullets. He escaped, and found safety in the deserts of the Thebaid.

* Saladin's name was Youssoof, Arabic for Joseph.

## CHAPTER IX.

HELIOPOLIS — GARDEN OF SHOOBRA — SLAVE-MARKET.

Egypt's tall obelisk, still defying Time,
While cities have been crumbled into sand,
Scattered by winds beyond the Arab's desert,
Or melted down into the mud of Nile.
JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Thence through a garden I was drawn,
A realm of pleasure—many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequered lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound;
And deep myrrh thickets blowing round
The stately cedars, tamarisks,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
Graven with emblems of the time.
ALFRED TENNYSON.

THE objects of interest in the neighbourhood of Cairo are very numerous. Leaving for the present the Pyramids, let us canter off to Heliopolis, the On of Scripture. It is only five miles of a pathway, shaded by sycamore and plane-trees, from which we emerge occasionally into green savannahs, or luxuriant corn-fields, over which the beautiful white ibis are hovering in flocks.

In Heliopolis, the Oxford of old Egypt, stood the great Temple of the Sun. Here the beautiful and the wise studied love and logic 4000 years ago. Here Joseph was married to the fair Asenath. Here Plato and Herodotus studied, and here the darkness which

veiled the Great Sacrifice on Calvary was observed by a heathen astronomer.* We found nothing, however, on the site of this ancient city, except a small garden of orange-trees, with a magnificent obelisk in the centre.

These obelisks seem never to have been isolated in the position for which they were originally hewn out of the granite quarries of Syene. They terminated avenues of columns or of statues, or stood in pairs before the entrance of the Propylæa, and bore in hieroglyphic inscriptions the destination of the temples to which they belonged.

People talk of the ruins of the temple of the Sun as being discoverable here; and there are reports about a sphinx, but we could discover neither. Here is the garden of Metarieh, where grew the celebrated balm of Gilead, presented by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, and brought to Egypt by Cleopatra. On our return towards Cairo, we were shown the fountain which refreshed and the tree which shaded the Holy Family in their flight to Egypt.

Another day we went to Shoobra, the palace and garden of Mehemet Ali. We cantered under a noble avenue of sycamores, just wide enough to preserve their shade, and, at the end of three miles, came to a low and unpretending gateway, picturesque, however, and covered with parasites. Without were tents and troops, and muskets piled, and horses ready saddled; but within all was peace and silence.

A venerable gardener, with a long white beard, received us at the entrance, and conducted us through the fairy-like garden, of which he might have passed for the guardian genius. There were very few flowers; but shade and greenery are everything in this glaring climate; and it was very delightful to stroll along these paths all shadowy with orange-trees, whose fruit, "like lamps in a night of green," hung temptingly over our heads. The fragrance of large beds of roses mingled with that of the orange flower, and seemed to repose on the quiet airs of that calm evening. In the midst of the garden we came to a vast pavilion, glittering like porcelain, and supported on light pillars, forming cloisters, that surrounded an immense marble basin, in the centre of which sparkling waters gushed from a picturesque fountain. Gaily painted little boats for the ladies of the hareem floated on the surface of this lake, through whose clear depths shoals of gold and silver fishes flashed lines of light. In each corner of the building there were gilded apartments, with divans, tables, mirrors, and all the simple furniture of an Eastern palace, in which books or pictures are never found.*

The setting sun threw his last shadows on the distant Pyramids as we lay upon the marble steps, inhaling the odours of the orange and pomegranate groves, and dreamily listening to the vespers of the busy birds, and the far-off hum of the city, and the faint murmur of the great river. The evening breeze was sighing among the palms and the columns of the palace, when we were startled by another rustle than that of leaves, and two Odalisques came laughing by, unconscious of our presence, and unveiled. The old Arab gardener anxiously signed to us to look another way, but for once I preferred European to Egyptian manners, and gazed admiringly on the startled pair. One was a very beautiful Georgian girl; I believe her companion was handsome too; but one such face was enough at a time, and, as it was not very quickly shrouded by her veil, I had a glimpse of as bright—no, that is not the word—but of as beautiful a countenance as poet ever dreamed of. She was very fair, and all but pale; the deep seclusion of her life had left but little colour on her cheek, and her exquisitely chiselled features would have been marble-like but for the resplendent eyes that lent life and lustre to the whole countenance. She started on seeing us, but observing we were Europeans, fear gave way to curiosity, and it was only when the old gardener came forward that she let fall her veil, and withdrew among the orange-groves.

Gardens are much cultivated in the East, though little understood, either as to ornament or management. They are strictly private, and appropriated to the inmates of the hareems. These women, denied the use of their masters' alphabet, have invented a far prettier one of their own, and literally indulge largely in flowers of speech. Every plant and blossom has a meaning attached to it; an epistle may be delivered in the form of a bouquet, and a poetical gardener may make a flower border do duty as a sonnet.

"These are the lands where they talk in flowers,
And they tell in a garland their loves and cares;
Each blossom that blooms in their garden bowers
On its leaf a mystic meaning bears."

A brilliant moon lighted our gallop back to Cairo: the gates were long since closed, but a bribe procured us easy admission.

* Dionysius, the Areopagite.

* The Koran is a library in itself to the Moslem. With respect to pictures, they take literally the injunction against "making a likeness of anything in heaven or earth." Moreover, they suppose that every painter or sculptor will be bound at the resurrection to provide all his human creations with souls.

In most cities you find a fringe of suburbs that prepares you for the transition from busy streets to silent fields; but at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Cairo, the moment you issue from the gates you are in the desert. The hyæna and the Arab prowl within hearing of the citizen. In a lonely valley, about a mile from Cairo, stand the tombs of the Mamelukes. These are mausolean palaces of great beauty and the richest Saracenic architecture, but they are now falling fast to decay, and only inhabited, or rather haunted, by some outcast Arabs and troops of wild dogs. They form a grand cemetery of their own, surrounded by the desert.

The petrified forest is about five miles away. My friend R. went there, and described it as a vast shelterless wilderness of sand, strewn with what seemed the chips of some gigantic carpenter's shop. There are no roots—much less appearance of a standing tree.

I have seen fragments of this petrified wood in other parts of the desert; it seems to have belonged to the palm and sycamore trees. They are found in the driest and most shelterless places, and when living must have had a hard time of it—like Niobe, exposed to the arrows of Apollo. Why, however, they should have turned, like her, to stone, not even the naturalists, those mythologists of phenomena, have explained satisfactorily.

One of the sights which amused me most was a chicken-hatching oven. This useful establishment is at some distance from the walls and gives life to some millions of chickens annually. It seems that the hens of Egypt are not given to sedentary occupations; having been hatched themselves by machinery, they do not feel called upon to hatch. They seem to consider that they have discharged every duty to society when they have produced the egg, no domestic anxiety ruffles their bosoms; they care not whether their offspring becomes a fowl or a fritter, a game-cock or an omelette. We entered a gloomy and filthy hut, in which a woman was squatting, with a dark, little, naked imp at her bosom. She sat sentry over a hole in the wall, and insisted clamorously on backsheesh (a bribe). Being satisfied in this particular, she consented "to sit over;" and we introduced ourselves with considerable difficulty into a narrow passage, on either side of which were three chambers, strown with fine mould, and covered with eggs, among which a naked Egyptian walks delicately as Agag, and keeps continually turning them with most hen-like anxiety. The heat was about 100°, the smell like that of Harrogate water, and the floor was covered with egg-shells and struggling chickens. The same heat is maintained day and night, and the same wretched hen-man passes his life in turning eggs. His fee is one-half the receipt; he returns fifty chickens for every hundred eggs that he receives.

It was the feast of lanterns. As we strolled by the soft moonlight, under the avenues of sycamore and olive trees that shadow the Esbekeyeh, we could see through the vistas an extensive encampment in the distance; innumerable lamps of various colours, and painted lanterns, shone among the tents and the dark foliage; not only did they glitter on every bough, and on a thousand banners, but scaffoldings were raised, on which they hung in garlands and festoons of light. The very sky above them wore the appearance of a faint dawn: every glimpse of the canals, every leaf in all the grove, shone with their reflected radiance. Of course *we* were soon struggling through the many-coloured crowd of the prophet's worshippers that thronged the encampment.

A Moslem mob is good-tempered and patient beyond belief; and that sea of turbans stagnated as calmly as if every wave of it was exactly in the position that he wished to occupy. Each tent was crowded to excess by performers or aspirants in a most singular religious ceremony. A ring of men, standing so closely side by side that they supported each other in their exhausting devotions, were vehemently shouting "Allah," or rather "Ullah," in chorus: they moved their bodies up and down, keeping strict time to this monotonous chant, exhaling their breath pantingly at every exclamation. Many were foaming at the mouth, some were incoherent; all seemed utterly exhausted, and fell, from time to time, among the crowd that was quietly squatted within their excited circle. They were instantly succeeded by others, and this proceeding continued till morning: every tent had its peaceful crowd of squatters, surrounded by its convulsive ring. None of the crowd appeared to take the slightest interest or curiosity about the business, before or after they had performed their own part. They then lighted their pipes, where they had room to do so, and gently struggled towards the flower-ornamented stalls, where coffee and sherbet were supplied. It was very refreshing to turn from this melancholy scene, so humbling to human nature, and find oneself in silence and solitude under the calm, pure skies, with the soothing whispers of the night breeze as it wandered among the feathery palms.

The next morning all Cairo was in movement to witness the ceremony of the *Doseh*, and we reached the Esbekeyeh just as the procession of Durweeshes advanced into the square, escorting their Sheikh, who alone

was on horseback. They marched in a close column, four abreast, waving flags belonging to the different districts in the town; a large green banner was carried before the Sheikh, who was the preacher at the mosque of Hassaneen. Under the guidance of our invaluable dragoman, Mahmoud, we struggled into the procession, and formed part of it, until it reached an open space, when the moving mass suddenly stood still: a cry of "Allah-lah-lah-lah!" was raised, and our crowd suddenly divided into two, leaving a canal with human banks between them.

The Durweeshes immediately flung themselves crosswise on the ground in this canal, with their faces downward, lying as closely side by side as they could pack themselves. Then another cry of "Allah'ah-'ah!" was raised—two or three men ran along over the prostrate bodies, arranging them more compactly—and then, with another shout of "Allah!" that made the trees tremble, on came the Sheikh, his horse caracolling along that living path, and led by two men who walked on a pavement of heads and feet. As the horse passed over him, each Durweesh started to his feet. Most of them were foaming at the mouth, and many were in fits, but the people maintained that no person was ever hurt, as the horse was upheld by supernatural agency. The four-footed brute did not share in the superstition evidently, for he trod as if he were walking on burning coals.

I went to visit the slave-markets, one of which is held without the city, in the court-yard of a deserted mosque. I was received by a mild-looking Nubian, with a large white turban wreathed over his swarthy brows, and a bernoose, or cloak, of white and brown striped hair-cloth, strapped round his loins. He rose and laid down his pipe as I entered, and led me in silence to inspect his stock. I found about thirty girls scattered in groups about an inner court. The gate was open, but there seemed no thought of escape. Where could they go, poor things? "The world was not their friend, or the world's law." Some of them were grinding millet between two stones; some were kneading the flour into bread; some were chatting in the sunshine; some sleeping in the shade. One or two looked sad and lonely enough, until their gloomy countenances were lighted up with hope—the hope of being bought! Their faces were, for the most part, wofully blank; not with the blankness of pleasure, but of intelligence; and many wore an awfully animal expression. Yet there were several figures of exquisite symmetry among them, which, had they been indeed the bronze statues they resembled, would have attracted the admiration of thousands, and would have been valued at twenty times the price that was set upon these immortal beings. Their proprietor showed them off as a horse-dealer does *his* cattle, examining their teeth, removing their body-clothes, and exhibiting their paces: he asked only from twenty-five to thirty pounds sterling for the best and comeliest of them. The Abyssinians are the most prized of the African slaves, from their superior gentleness and intelligence; those of the Galla country are the most numerous and hardy. The former have well-shaped heads, beautiful eyes, an agreeable brown colour, and shining, smooth black tresses. The latter have low foreheads, crisp hair, sooty complexions, thick lips, and projecting jaws.

It is like the change from night to morning, to pass from these dingy crowds to the white slaves from Georgia and Circassia. It is not without considerable difficulty that admission is obtained into this department of the human bazaars, as its commodities are only purchased by wealthy and powerful Moslems; and, when purchased, are destined to form part of the female aristocracy of Cairo.

These fetch from one, two, three, or even five hundred pounds; and, being so much more valuable than the Africans, are much more carefully tended. They reclined upon carpets, richly but lightly clad. Some were smoking; some chatting merrily together; some sitting in a dreamy languor. All their attitudes were very graceful, as seems necessarily the case when well-formed women are left to themselves, and grouped upon a floor.

They were, for the most part, exquisitely fair; but I was disappointed in their beauty. The sunny hair and heaven-blue eyes, that in England produce such an angel-like and intellectual effect, seemed to me here mere flax and beads; and I left them to the "turbaned Turk" without a sigh—except, perhaps, a very little one, for those far away in mine own land, whose image they served, however faintly, to recall.

It is the usual custom of travellers to pour forth a torrent of indignation on the slave-markets of the East. Certainly they do not sound well, and far be it from me to become their advocate; nevertheless, it is not just to paint the black prince blacker than he is, even when speaking of niggers. It is not fair to judge of the sufferings or sensations of these creatures by the standard of our own people. It is true they are only clothed with a blanket or a napkin, but that is the full dress of their native land. They are fed on coarse flour-cakes and water, but that is the beef and beer of Ethiopia. Their domestic ties are broken, but they are not like *our* ties, whatever morbid philanthropy may say; and if they were, the slave-dealer is

only in the relation to them of a new poor-law guardian amongst us. By the law of Mahomet, it is forbidden to separate the slave mother from her young child; she who has borne a child to her master becomes a free woman from that hour, and the slave who purchases or acquires his freedom at once takes his place among the most respectable classes of the community. Thus, hope—heaven's best gift, to nabob or to negro—is never denied them. Slaves suffer much hardship and cruelty, it is too true, during their passage of the desert, and down the Nile; but, once purchased, they are treated with the same care and kindness, they have the same food and clothes, as the free servant; and they have nothing of the stigma which is attached to their undeserved destiny in the free and enlightened, and repudiating republic of America. It is to be considered, also, that they are, for the most part, prisoners of war, and exchange a cruel death for that servitude which is the lot of the freest of us all, in one form or another.

As for the Georgian and Circassian beauties, they have never learned what love or freedom means; they have been educated for exportation; their only ambition, like that of many fair maidens in happier lands, is to fetch a high price; and their only hope is to be first favourite in the hareem — *whose* hareem they care not.

Nothing can palliate the crime of slavery; and the attempt to do so would ill become a native of that country which, alone in the world's history, gave disinterestedly the blood of her brave, and the wealth of her industrious people to abolish slavery. But a wide distinction should be drawn between the slavery of the East and of the West. In the former, it is of patriarchal origin, and the slave becomes a part of his purchaser's household, identified with its prosperity and cares; in the latter, he is an outlaw from humanity, even from American humanity, and nothing of man is recognized in the slave but the intelligence and the strength that make him an object of value to his tyrant.

It is forbidden by the law of Mahomet to sell slaves to Christians, out of regard to their souls! We may smile at it, but we cannot scorn this consideration. Cairo is remarkable for latitudinarianism in matters of faith; but at Damascus the traveller can only obtain admission to the slave-bazaar under the disguise of oriental costume. Even in the former city, however, the difficulty of access is daily increased, from the insults with which the slave-owners are overwhelmed by Christians *after* they have satisfied their curiosity.

## CHAPTER X.

### WOMAN—THE HAREEM.

Thus in the ever-closed hareem,
As in the open Western home,
Sheds womanhood her starry gleam
Over our being's busy foam.
Through latitudes of varying faith,
Thus trace we still her mission sure,
To lighten life, to sweeten death,
And all for others to endure.

R. M. MILNES.

ON entering a strange country, its women are the first objects of interest, to the moralist as well as to the epicurean; to the former, because the education of a people, and the framework of its society, depend mainly upon maternal and domestic character; to the latter, because almost every grace and charm of daily life is owing to her influence, or interwoven with her being—"On a dit, qu'il y a de la femme dans tout ce qu'on aime."

Among the lower classes of all nations, especially in the country, the life and habits of women approximate more or less to that of men in an inverse proportion to their civilization. As they share with the ruder sex their labours, and hardships, and daily occupation, among savage tribes almost the only distinction between the sexes is physical. It is of the Moslem woman of the middle and upper classes that I am now about to speak, and I do so with a diffidence proportioned to such mysterious matters.

Difficult a study as woman presents in all countries, that difficulty deepens almost into impossibility in a land where even to look upon her is a matter of danger or of death. The seclusion of the hareem is preserved in the very streets by means of an impenetrable veil; the well-bred Egyptian averts his eyes as she passes by; she is ever to remain an object of mystery; and the most intimate acquaintance never inquires after the wife of his friend, or affects to know of her existence.* This very mystery, however, piques the often-baffled inquirer; and between Europeans, who have become almost Egyptian, and Egyptians who have become almost European, one is able to obtain some information even on this delicate subject.

The Eastern woman seems as happy in her lot as her European sister, notwithstanding the plurality of wives in which her lord indulges, or ventures upon. In her "public opinion's law" there is no more

* If alluded to at all by other lips than those of her proprietor, or written to, it is as "the guarded lady,"—"the concealed jewel."—LANE.

disparagement in occupying the second place as a wife, than there is in Europe as a daughter. The manners of patriarchal ages remain in Egypt as unchanged as its monuments; and the people of Cairo no more think of objecting to a man's marrying a second wife, than those of Memphis thought of questioning the legitimacy of Joseph. The Koran, following the example of the Jewish doctors, only allows four wives to each Mussulman, and they seldom avail themselves even of this limited allowance to its fullest extent. Some hareems contain two hundred females, including wives, mothers-in-law, concubines, and the various slaves belonging to each; but these feminine barracks seem very different from what such establishments would be in Europe. In the hareem there is as much order and decorum as in an English quaker's home. It is guarded as the tiger guards his young; but its inmates consider this as a compliment, and fancy themselves neglected if not closely watched. This cause for complaint seldom occurs, for the Egyptian has no blind confidence in the strength of woman's character, or woman's love; he considers it safer, if not more glorious, to keep her out of the reach of temptation, than to run the chance of her overcoming it when exposed to its encounter.

Born and brought up in the hareem, women never seem to pine at its imprisonment: like cage-born birds, they sing among their bars, and discover in their aviaries a thousand little pleasures invisible to eyes that have a wider range. There are no literary ladies: knowing not the thoughts of others, they associate the more with their own; and who can tell what wild and beautiful regions of imagination their minds may wander through, unimprisoned, if undirected by education? To them, in their calm seclusion, the strifes of the battling world come softened and almost hushed; they only hear the far-off murmur of life's stormy sea; and, if their human lot dooms them to their cares, they are as transient as those of childhood.

Once, as I was passing through the secluded suburbs of Cairo, I found myself near one of the principal hareems. I paused by the dull, dark wall, over which the palm-tree waved, and the scent of flowers and the bubbling of fountains stole; and there I listened to the sweet laughter of the Odalisques within. This was broken by snatches of untaught song, to which the merry unseen band joined chorus, and kept time by clapping hands, on which their jewelled bracelets tinkled. It was a music of most merry mirth; and, as I pictured to myself the gay group within, I wondered whether they deserved that pity of their European sisters which they so little appreciate. An English lady, visiting an Odalisque, inquired what pleasure her profusion of rich ornaments could afford, as no person except her husband was ever to behold them. "And for whom," replied the fair barbarian, "do *you* adorn yourself? is it for other men?"

I have conversed with several European ladies who had visited hareems, and they have all confessed their inability to convince the Eastern wives of the unhappiness or hardship of their state. It is true that the inmate of the hareem knows nothing of the advantages of the wild liberty (as it seems to her) that the European woman enjoys. She has never witnessed the domestic happiness that crowns a fashionable life, or the peace of mind and purity of heart that reward the labours of a London season; and what can *she* know of the disinterested affection and changeless constancy of ball-room belles, in the land where woman is all free? Let them laugh on, in their happy ignorance of a better lot, while round them is gathered all that their lord can command of luxury and pleasantness. His wealth is hoarded for them alone; he permits himself no ostentation, except the respectable one of arms and horses; and the time is weary that he passes apart from his home and his hareem. The sternest tyrants are gentle there; Mehemet Ali never refused a woman's prayer; and even Ali Pasha was partly humanized by his love for Emineh. In the time of the Mamelukes, criminals were always led to execution blindfolded as, if they had met a woman and could touch her garment, they were saved, whatever was their crime. Thus idolized, watched, and guarded, the Egyptian woman's life is, nevertheless, entirely in the power of her lord, and her death is the inevitable penalty of his dishonour. No piquant case of *crim. con.* ever amuses the Egyptian public: the injured husband is his own judge and jury; his only "gentlemen of the long robe" are his eunuchs; and the knife or the Nile the only damages. The law never interferes in these little domestic arrangements.

Poor Fatima! shrined as she was in the palace of a tyrant, the fame of her beauty stole abroad through Cairo. She was one amongst a hundred in the hareem of Abbas Pasha, a man stained with every foul and loathsome vice; and who can wonder, though many may condemn, if she listened to a daring young Albanian, who risked his life to obtain but a sight of her! Whether she *did* listen or not, none can ever know; but the eunuchs saw the glitter of the Arnaut's arms, as he leaped from her terrace into the Nile and vanished in the darkness. The following night, a merry English party dined

together on board Lord E——'s boat, as it lay moored off the Isle of Rhoda; conversation had sunk into silence, as the calm night came on; a faint breeze floated perfumes from the gardens over the star-lit Nile, and scarcely moved the clouds that rose from the chibouque; a dreamy languor seemed to pervade all nature, and even the city lay hushed in deep repose, when suddenly a boat, crowded with dark figures, among which arms gleamed, shot out from one of the arches of the palace; it paused under the opposite bank, where the water rushed deep and gloomily along, and for a moment a white figure glimmered amongst that boat's dark crew; there was a slight movement, and a faint splash, and then the river flowed on as merrily as if poor Fatima still sang her Georgian song to the murmur of its waters.

I was riding one evening along the banks of the Mareotis; the low land, half swamp, half desert, was level as the lake; there was no sound except the ripple of the waves along the far extended shore, and the heavy flapping of the pelican's wings as she rose from the water's edge. Not a palm-tree raised its plumy head, not a shrub crept along the ground; the sun was low, but there was nothing to cast a shadow over the monotonous waste, except a few Moslem tombs with their sculptured turbans. These stood apart from every sign of life, and even of their kindred dead, like those upon the Lido at Venice.

As I paused to contemplate this scene of desolation, an Egyptian hurried past me with a bloody knife in his hand; his dress was mean and ragged, but his countenance was one that the father of Don Carlos might have worn; he never raised his eyes as he rushed by; and my groom, who just then came up, told me he had slain his wife, and was going to her father's village to denounce her.

My boat was moored in the little harbour of Assouan, the old Syene, the boundary between Egypt and Ethiopia; opposite, lies Elephantina, the "isle of flowers," strewed with ruins, and shaded by magnificent palm-trees; the last eddies of the cataract of the Nile foam round dark red granite cliffs, which rise precipitously from the river, and are piled into a mountain crowned by a ruined Saracenic castle. A forest of palm-trees divides the village from the quiet shore on whose silvery sands my tent was pitched. A man in an Egyptian dress saluted me in Italian, and in a few moments was smoking my chibouque, and sipping coffee by my side. He was very handsome; but his faded cheek and sunken eye showed hardship and suffering, and he spoke in a low and humble voice. In reply to my question, as to how a person of his appearance came into this remote region, he told me that he had been lately practising as a surgeon in Alexandria; he had married a Levantine girl, whose beauty was to him as "la faccia del cielo." He had been absent from his home, and she had betrayed him. On his return, he had met her with a smiling countenance; in the evening he accompanied her to a deep well, whither she went to draw water, and, as she leaned over it, he threw her in. As he said this, he paused and placed his hands upon his ears, as if he still heard her dying shriek. He then continued: "I have fled from Alexandria till the affair is blown over. I was robbed near Siout, and have supported myself miserably ever since, by giving medical advice to the poor country people. I shall soon return, and all will be forgotten. If I had not avenged myself, her own family must have done so, you know." And so this woman-murderer smoked on, and continued talking in a low and gentle voice till the moon was high; then he went his way, and I saw him no more.

## CHAPTER XI.

### WOMAN—LOVE—IMMORTALITY.

What! thou, man! love!
It never touched thee—love! why it exists
In self-devotion: sacrifice and toil
Are the pure air it breathes in.
. . . For shame! presume not
To call thy selfish, woe-creating lust,
By the proud title of that godlike virtue.
. . . *Welcome and farewell.*

W. HARNESS.

Oh, who young Leila's glance could read,
And keep that portion of his creed
Which says, that woman's soul is dust!

BYRON

"By the blue light in the eye of innocence," as Vivian Grey so prettily swears, I would not exchange one freely-given English heart to be lord of all the hareems in the East—no, though I write in an orange grove, with the thermometer at ninety in the shade. It is in vain to attempt to make out a case in favour of a system by which man, in degrading woman, degrades himself.

The Egyptian has no home—at least, in the English sense of that sacred word: his sons are only half brothers, and generally at enmity with each other; his daughters are transplanted while yet children into some other hareem; and his wives, when their beauty is gone by, are frequently divorced without a cause to make room for some younger rival. The result is, that the Egyptian is a sensualist and a slave, and only fit

to be a subject in what prophecy long since foretold his country should become—"the basest of kingdoms."

The women have all the insipidity of children, without their innocence or sparkling freshness. Their beauty, voluptuous and soulless, appeals only to the senses; it has none of that pure and ennobling influence

"That made us what we are—the great, the free—
And bade earth bow to England's chivalry."

The Moslem purchases his wife as he does his horse: he laughs at the idea of honour and of love: the armed eunuch and the close-barred window are the only safeguards of virtue that he relies on. Every luxury lavished on the Odalisque is linked with some precaution, like the iron fruit and flowers in the madhouse at Naples, that seemed to smile round those whom they imprison. Nor is it for her own sake, but that of her master, that woman is supplied with every luxury that wealth can procure. As we gild our aviaries, and fill them with exotics native to our foreign birds, in order that their song may be sweet and their plumage bright; so the King of Babylon built the Hanging Gardens for the mountain girl, who pined and lost her beauty among the level plains of the Euphrates. The Egyptian is quite satisfied if his Nourmahal* be in "good condition:" mindless himself, what has he to do with mind?

And thus woman lives and dies, as if she were indeed the mere animal his miserable creed would make her. Utterly uncultivated, her education limited to staining her eyes with khol, and her fingers with henna, the Egyptian girl's mind wanders, like the river Shannon, "at its own sweet will;" and, between human nature and the conversation of the old Jezebels who haunt the hareems, the result is not very favourable. I grieve to say it, but I am credibly informed that a denizen of Billingsgate would be rather startled at the copiousness and strength of expression, and the knowledge of human nature that flows from the rosy lips of these Haidees and Zuleikas. Then they become mothers, these wife-children, and the education of their offspring is entirely their work. Whence can these poor children learn those lessons of honour, truth, and faith, which should seem to be intuitive, being heard with the first intelligence of the young heart? Woman, degraded herself, most unconsciously avenges her degradation upon man, by sending him forth to the world without one manly thought.

And yet, amidst all these disadvantages, Nature vindicates herself in one redeeming virtue—that of filial affection; and the child, though a bad patriot, a bad subject, a bad citizen, is yet a good son.

The Egyptian woman, obliged to share her husband's affection with a hundred others in *this* world, is yet further supplanted in the next by the Houris, a sort of she-angel, of as doubtful a character as even a Moslem paradise could well tolerate; nay, more, it is a very moot point among Mussulman D.D.s whether women have any soul at all, or not. I believe their principal chance of immortality rests on a tradition of a conversation between Mahomet and an old woman who frequently importuned him for a good place in paradise. "Trouble me not," said the husband of Cadijah;* "there *can* be no old women in paradise." Whereupon, the aged applicant made so troublesome a lamentation, that he added, "because the old will then all be made young again."

This is but poor comfort for those whom "angels were painted fair to look like;" but I can find no allusion to woman's immortality in all the Koran, except incidentally, as where "all men and women are to be tried at the last day."

There is something touching in the yearnings after religious privileges that are exhibited by some Moslem women, and the devotedness with which they discharge any religious duties or penances that are permitted to them. A comparatively small part of the faith of Islam is comprised in the Koran. The greater part of the observances, and all the heresies, have originated from the Sonna, or traditionary oral teaching of the Prophet. Some of the less stern commentators have gleaned some heavenly hope for women out of this confused and contradictory mass of doctrine. The result is not very encouraging; but the drowning catch at straws, and there have been female devotees as earnest as any other Moslem.

Women are not enjoined to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, but they are permitted to do so. They are not enjoined to pray; but the Prophet seemed to think that it could do them no harm, provided they prayed in their own houses, and not in the mosques, where they might interfere with, or share, the devotion of those who had real business there.

As may be supposed, there being some difficulty on the subject, woman's faith burns high at the prospect of a pilgrimage to Mecca; and numbers, accordingly, of those doubtful immortalities join themselves to

* Light of the hareem.

* She was fifteen years older than himself, the foundress of his fortunes, and yet more useful to him as his first convert.

each caravan that issues from the gates of Cairo. The privations they undergo and the hardships they surmount are incredible; yet the mortality among them is not so great as that of the men, in proportion to their numbers.

When arrived at Mecca, a new difficulty arises: the most important part of the pilgrimage is performed on the summit of Mount Arafat, about twenty miles from Mecca, whereon Abraham is said to have brought Isaac to the sacrifice. No woman is allowed to approach this most holy spot without her husband; and, as many of them are not possessed of these appendages, they are obliged to borrow them for the occasion, faithfully repaying to the accommodating man the loan of his liberty on their return from the mountain, by a divorce at Mecca.

After all that has been asserted by philo-Moslemites on the subject, I am convinced that Moslem women have no chance of heaven worth talking of, except in one case, and this exception proves the rule. If a Moslem in paradise should feel that his wife's company was essential to his happiness, she would be re-created for him there: thus, Mahomet confers upon his follower that divinest privilege of bestowing immortality on her whom he loves.

In fine, women receive no religious education; they seldom, if ever, pray; and their heaven, if they have one at all, is some second-hand paradise, very different from that of their husbands, unless, as I have observed, "by particular desire."

Is not this in itself a sufficient commentary on the position which she occupies in the Moslem world? And what must be the blindness, the selfishness, and the bigotry of that man's mind, who can lend himself to such a doctrine? While the stars in the bright skies he lives under afford intimations of eternity which he eagerly believes, can the eloquent eyes of woman plead vainly for immortality? When he leaves his home for the battle-field, can he feel that a whole heaven of Houris would compensate for the loss of "a mutual home beyond the skies" with her who shared his sorrows and his joys on earth? The dark and dastardly doctrine of fatalism is a ready excuse to his indolent mind from exercising itself in such matters. Were the future fate of his helpmate of any anxious moment to him, the priests would long since have distilled an express heaven for her out of that accommodating crucible, the Koran.

There is not an Egyptian woman who can read and write, except a daughter of Mehemet Ali's, and the few that have been educated in the school of Mr. Lieder, the Church of England missionary; while the Maronite women of the Lebanon, who are Christians, though of the same Arab race, are generally instructed.

Nothing can be more hideous than the Arab woman of the street; nothing more picturesque than her of the hareem. The former presents a mass of white, shroud-like drapery, waddling along on a pair of enormous yellow boots, with one brilliant eye gleaming above the veil which is drawn *across* the face. The lower classes wear only a very loose, long, blue frock, and appear anxious to conceal nothing except their faces, in which they consider that identity alone consists. As these women cannot spare the hands to the exclusive use of their veils, they wear a sort of snout, or long, black, tapering veil, bound over the cheek-bones, and supported from the forehead by a string of beads.

Take one of these, an ugly, old, sun-scorched hag, with a skin like a hippopotamus, and a veil-snout like an elephant's trunk; her scanty robe scarcely serving the purposes of a girdle; her hands, feet, and forehead tattooed of a smoke colour; and there is scarcely a more hideous spectacle on earth. But the lady of the hareem, on the other hand—couched gracefully on a rich Persian carpet, strewn with soft pillowy cushions—is as rich a picture as admiration ever gazed on. Her eyes, if not as dangerous to the heart as those of our country, where the sunshine of intellect gleams through a heaven of blue, are, nevertheless, perfect in their kind—and at least as dangerous to the senses. Languid, yet full, brimful of life; dark, yet very lustrous; liquid, yet clear as stars; they are compared by their poets to the shape of the almond, and the bright timidness of the gazelle's. The face is delicately oval, and its shape is set off by the rich red and purple and golden turban, the most becoming head-dress in the world. The long, black, silken tresses are braided from the forehead, and hang wavily on each side of the face; behind they fall in a glossy cataract sparkling with little golden drops, such as might have glittered on Danaë when she came forth from her shower-bath. A light tunic of pink or pale blue crape is covered with a long silk robe, open at the bosom, and buttoned thence downward to the delicately slippered little feet that peep daintily from beneath the full silken trousers. Round the loins, rather than the waist, a cachemire shawl is loosely wrapt as a girdle, and an embroidered jacket, or a large silk robe, with loose, open sleeves, completes the costume. Nor is the water-pipe, with its long variegated serpent, and its jewelled mouthpiece, any detraction from the portrait.

Picture to yourself one of Eve's brightest daughters, in Eve's own loving land. The woman-dealer has found among the mountains that perfection in living woman which Praxiteles scarcely realized, when inspired fancy wrought out its ideal in marble. Silken scarfs, as richly coloured and as airy as the rainbow, wreathe her round, from the snowy brow to the finely rounded limbs, half buried in billowy cushions; the attitude is the very poetry of repose; languid it may be, but glowing life is thrilling beneath that flower-soft exterior, from the varying cheek and flashing eye, to the henna-dyed, taper fingers that capriciously play with the rosary of beads. The blaze of sunshine is round her kiosk, but she sits in the softened shadow so dear to the painter's eye. And so she dreams away the warm hours in such a calm of thought within, and sight or sound without, that she almost starts when the gold-fish gleams in the fountain, or the breeze-ruffled roses shed blossoms on her bosom.

But take a better picture, from one who never saw her but in imagination, and then how truly!

"Then stole I up, and trancedly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes,
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Fretted with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Floating beneath her rose-hued zone;
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Al Raschid." *

The mystery, the seclusion, and the danger that surrounds the Odalisque, are perilously attractive to the romantic; but to a matter-of-fact person like myself, an English fireside, a Scottish mountain, or an Irish glen, have more inducements than any Zenana: and the women who inhabit them, with purity in the heart, and intellect on the brow, and a cottage bonnet on the head, much better worth risking life for, than all the voluptuous beauty of the East.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MOSLEM.

Where'er the sun before them shone,
And paved the world with gold,
They passed. Round Earth's most favoured zone
Their chief his turban rolled.
From Hagar's desert, Ishmael's plains,
To Ocean's western fold,
They reared their crescent-crowned fanes,
And cloistered fountains cold.

AUBREY DE VERE.

How comes it that almost every event of vivid romance, and visible chivalry, and poetry of action,† belongs to the olden time of man; while woman, his inspiration, his goddess as a pagan, his idol as a Christian, remains to this day, in being and in influence, the same? From the gardens of Eden to the thrones of Europe and the village green she has ever exercised despotic influence over the destinies of her "lord and master." At this day, we meet Rebeccas at every well, and Hagars in every desert of the East; Ediths, moreover, sometimes, and Erminias; but where is the hunter Ishmael now? where the rash, generous Esau, the outlaw of the Israelitish fold? where are the chivalrous Saracen and the bold Crusader now? Alas! the two former are represented by a swindling, camel-jobbing Sheikh, who will try to cheat you on Mount Sinai; the latter, by the slavish Arab of the Nile, and the travelling dandy who employs him.

Far pleasanter would it be to enlist the reader as the follower of Mahomet through the following chapter, to take up the standard of the Prophet and accompany it in its marvellous progress over the wide East, until it waved upon the towers of Jerusalem and saw its green folds reflected in the waters of the Nile. Pleasanter would it be to go back to the old times of Egypt's mysterious history, when men were blended and confounded with the Gods, and the dreamlike glories of Karnak seemed almost to justify such presumption. However visionary the pursuit, and however faint the approximation to the truth, it is still pleasant to be humbugged by the priests with Herodotus; to go body-snatching in kingly tombs with brave Belzoni; or even to pick beetles, and read "handwriting on the walls" with Rozellini, Champollion, and Sir Gardner Wilkinson—pleasanter would any of these subjects be than the dry discussion of common-place life in these common-place times. But the attempt to introduce such subjects into these slight pages would be as vain as to embroider muslin with Cleopatra's needle. A glimpse at men and things of our own times is all that I can hope to offer; and if it be not vivid and comprehensive, it shall be at least faithful, as far as in me lies.

The graceful garb, the flowing beard, and the majestic appearance of Orientals, are very imposing to a stranger's eye. The rich colouring, the antique attitudes, the various complexions, that continually present themselves, form an unceasing series of "tableaux vivans" in an Eastern city. And when over these is poured the brilliant sunshine of their climate, now making strong shadow of a

* Alfred Tennyson.

† "Sir Philip Sidney's life was poetry turned into action."—CAMPBELL.

palm-tree, or a pile of Saracenic architecture, now gleaming upon jewel-hilted scimitar or gorgeous draperies, daily life wears a picturesqueness and an interest, all unintelligible in this land of fog and macintoshes.

The population of Cairo is composed of the descendants of Æthiopians, Romans, Greeks, Persians, Saracens, Arabs, and modern Europeans. The general maternity of the middle classes is Abyssinian. The variety of feature, form, colour, and character, resulting from such a mingling of races may be easily conceived. With respect to colour, the effect is pretty much the same as if all the tints in a paint-box were mixed up together, a variously modified brown being the result. In the women especially, the eye soon becomes accustomed to this complexion; and, as the Eastern people never become reconciled to ours, it would appear that we are not of the "right colour," after all; that our swarthy brethren have some strong grounds for asserting that Adam and Eve were copper-coloured, or something more; and that pallor of skin first appeared when Cain was questioned as to the cause of his brother's death. One fact relating to colour struck me as singular, that the Arabs were no darker in the face than on the arms or other parts usually protected from the sun.

On our return from Nubia, we found ourselves, on our first glimpse in a looking-glass after two months' absence, daguerreotyped into a very magpie complexion—face, neck, and hands were demon-dark; while forehead and arms looked woman white from the contrast. The Turk seems to suffer little change from climate, notwithstanding the light-brown colour of his hair and moustaches; and his olive-coloured complexion never assumes that yellowish tinge that seems peculiar to the people of Lower Egypt. As you ascend the river, the colour deepens gradually, so that you might almost calculate the latitude by the shade of its inhabitants' complexions. Strange to say, however, after you have arrived at, and passed through, a nation as black as midnight, with coarse, crisp hair, you emerge, farther on, amongst a people of light-olive colour, with smooth, shining tresses; these characteristics show the Abyssinian, who appears to be the purest and most distinct race in Africa. As the Egyptian generally has his family by Abyssinian wives or slaves, instead of, or in addition to, his Arab wives, he degenerates, in every generation, from the pure Arab race. The Bedouin requires a chapter to himself; the Osmanli, or Turk, will be introduced under the head of Constantinople; the Copt will appear in better company than he deserves, in speaking of the missionary schools; and our present business is with the Moslem-Egyptian-Arab of the cities and the villages along the Nile.

His childhood is passed in his mother's hareem in languor and effeminacy; he is not weaned for eighteen months, and his infancy is proportionately prolonged. When he goes to school, his education is limited chiefly to reading and writing in Arabic, and sometimes a little arithmetic. Those who go to the University (in the mosque of el Az-har) acquire little more instruction of any practical utility. If an Egyptian can read, write, and repeat the greater part of the Koran, he is considered very learned; if to this he adds some knowledge of Arab poetry, he is a very accomplished and "promising young man."

The chief studies in the University are Mahomet's religion, and Heaven knows whose jurisprudence! medicine, chemistry, astronomy, and other sciences which we derived from the East, are very little cultivated. This, however, is to be understood only of the Egyptian when left to himself: Mehemet Ali has recently established numerous schools for boys, which I shall speak of when discussing the character of the Pasha.

An Egyptian infant is the most ill-favoured object in human creation; a name is applied to him with as little ceremony as a nickname is with us; and, indeed, there are not perhaps twenty different names distributed among the 200,000 Moslem inhabitants of Cairo: they are almost all taken from the Prophet or his immediate relations and followers. In our crew of ten men, we had five Mahmouds, or Mohammeds, two Ibraheems, three Abdallahs, and a Jād. As the Egyptian grows into childhood, he appears still more deformed, and extremely corpulent; but in manhood he becomes well-proportioned, stalwart, and sinewy; those at least who are employed upon the river.

The city Egyptian never takes any active exercise, and passes nearly all his time squatted on his divan or counter. Many of the shopkeepers at Cairo are merely amateur tradesmen, being possessed of private property, and carrying on business as good young ladies do in *other* bazaars, for amusement only.

Along the river, and among the villages, the poor man is occupied with agriculture, boat-building, or the most laborious occupation of pumping up water to irrigate the fields. His children of both sexes run about naked, or nearly so; and if the little girls *have* a rag upon them, they coquettishly cover their *faces* with it. The peasant's utmost exertions scarcely suffice to earn twopence a day; and even this pittance is often

wrung from him for the Pasha, when some neighbour has failed in the taxes, for which the community is answerable. Yet happy does he consider himself if allowed even thus to struggle on through life. The bright sun shines, and the cool river flows for him, however deep his poverty; and the faint shadow of freedom that he enjoys gives energy to his labours, however severe. But the Pasha must have workmen for his factories, and labourers for his crops. Conscription, for these purposes, then seizes those whom that for war has spared; and the fellah is torn from his home, to work under the lash of a task-master, for the nominal wages of two-pence halfpenny a day. This is sometimes two years in arrear, and even then paid half in kind, at the Pasha's valuation of whatever he has least occasion for.

Such is the Egyptian peasant's lot, aggravated by privations that are incredible. If sick, he has no medicine or medical advice, and he dies; if starving, he must steal from his own crop, which the Pasha has set his seal upon, and he suffers the bastinado. If a conscript for war, he is kept in camp until no longer fit for service; then thrown upon the world to beg and die.

This is a dreary picture, it is likewise true; and yet, even under all these miseries, even here the "human heart vindicates its strong right to be glad:" and amongst the most wretched hovels, and the most abject misery of appearance, I thought I could observe about the same proportion of merriment and amusement, sorrow and indifference, as in joyous Italy, or even in our own favoured islands. Man's nature, however degraded, still shows itself superior to circumstance; and the free spirit seems to scorn the laws of its flesh prison.

Long subjugation to foreign tyranny has wrought the effect that might be expected on the Egyptian's character. He justly considers the law under which he lives as but a formal instrument of oppression, and his pride and ingenuity are perpetually tasked to evade it. The blood that has been so profusely shed in all ages has only served to rivet his chains, or to promote the object of some ephemeral tyrant, and he abhors the name of war. His religion teaches him that falsehood is allowable in transactions with infidels, and he despises truth. The same religion allows him to divorce or marry as often as he pleases, and he looks upon woman merely as the creature of his pleasures.

Never does patriotism appear in a narrower form than the Egyptian. It is entirely distinct from dignity or moral pride. His wretched race have poured their blood in battle from all time, but never in defence of a fatherland. Tyrant after tyrant has made use of their sinews and lives, with as little result to them as those of the Roman gladiators. The Egyptian's attachment to the soil is simply feline. He is uncomfortable anywhere else. All the factitious luxuries of Europe cannot compensate to him for the voluptuous climate, the loved river with its indolent flow, the whispers of the palm-forest bending with his favourite fruit. The Pasha and the Sheikh may rob him to the uttermost; his sense of destiny, and his unconsciousness of wrong, will make him submit to tyranny and oppression without repining. Leave him but his liberty, such as it is, and his sunny home, and he asks no more on this side of Paradise.

In no other people, perhaps, is their history so clearly legible as in the Egyptian character: his loyalty is slavishness; his courage is ferocity; his religion, superstition; his love, wholly sensual; his abstinence, pharisaical; his resignation, a dastard fatalism. Yet, let us rather wonder, remembering the disadvantages he labours under, that any virtues should exist under such influences than that vices should abound.

When young, the Egyptian is remarkably precocious in intellect, and learns with facility. As he grows up, his intelligence seems to be dulled or diminished. He has no genius for discovery, and, though apt in acquiring rudiments, he is incapable of generalizing. He fills subordinate departments well, but appears incapable of taking or of keeping a lead.

The dress of the middle classes consists of a red cloth skull-cap, over which is wound a turban of green, or black, or white muslin, according to the station or the creed of the wearer. The first is only worn by descendants of the Prophet; the second by the Copts, or Egyptian Christians; the third is open to any who chooses to adopt it. A chemise of cotton is covered by a silk waistcoat, and very loose cotton drawers: over this is worn a loose robe of striped silk, with wide sleeves, confined round the body by a rich silken scarf, and over all is generally worn another loose robe of cloth, or darker coloured silk. A pair of yellow slippers is worn within another pair of a red colour, which they put off on entering a mosque, or private dwelling.

The Mohammedan faith is strictly unitarian: they pray to the Prophet only as an intercessor. The religious Moslem performs his devotions five times a day, and sometimes twice in the night besides; he is strictly observant of numerous and trying fasts; he distributes alms in large proportion to his means; every act of his life is prefaced by a prayer, and yet he trusts to God's mercy alone for his hopes of heaven. He is ever conscious of the invisible and future world,

and takes pride in acts of devotion that seem to him a vindication of his claims to a connection with that world. For this reason he despises the Protestant, whom he calls the "prayerless," as he looks down on the Roman Catholic and the Greek as idolaters, on account of their processions, and their worship of saints and images.

Unfortunately, this familiarity with the name of the Deity leads to its introduction on the most irrelevant and irreverent subjects; and he often prefaces with "Please God," or "God prosper me," an observation which might make the "prayerless" Protestant blush to listen to.

The Moslem is the slave of superstitions, those shadows of the light of faith that haunt every action of his life. Handsome children are generally kept foully dirty and ill-dressed, to avoid the dangerous effects of the Evil Eye; they carry round their necks charms against accident and misfortune, which consist of verses from the Koran, wrapped in silk and leather: they live in great dread of the Ginn, or Geni; if they yawn, they ejaculate a prayer that the devil may not be allowed to jump down their throats; if they pour water on the ground, they apologise to any Geni who may happen to be in the way, and be wet by it: they wear the finger of a dead Jew or Christian, as a preservative against the ague; and when they observe a falling star, they never fail to exclaim, "May God transfix the enemy of the faith!" believing these stars to be levelled against burglarious Ginn, who are attempting to break into heaven. Their resignation is the most respectable part of their religious creed. The most sudden and bitter misfortune is received as sent from God, and to be borne with humble patience. Death itself, cowardly as they seem in other respects, is encountered and undergone with dignity and fortitude. In setting out to travel, the Moslem is more anxious to provide himself with a shroud than any other "change" of linen. If he is ill by the wayside, the caravan, which waits for none, moves on, and his death is inevitable: the sufferer kneels down and performs his ablution with sand, and prays; then, putting on his shroud, he exercises his remaining strength in scraping his grave, leaving a heap of sand on the windy side; and then he lays him down to die, trusting to the desert wind to cover him, with a parting prayer that his lonely grave may not be forgotten by the Resurrection Angel at the last day.*

Friday is the Moslem sabbath, on which they have prayers and sermons in all the mosques. Women and children are seldom allowed to perform their devotions at the same time, and never in the same place, with the men: few of the former, indeed, ever pray at all.

The Moslem, when his last hour is come, turns himself in the direction of Mecca, and dies with as much resignation as if he did it on purpose, or, to use their expression, "as if he blew out his own candle." Then his family raise cries of lamentation, such as "Oh, my camel!" "Oh, my lion!" "Oh, my only one!" These ejaculations become more striking as they proceed. "Oh, my buffalo!" does not sound pathetic, though it means simply that the dead was their support; and "Oh, my jackass!" sounds ambiguous, until the addition of "bearer of my burdens" turns it to eloquence. The wailing women (the keeners of Ireland) and the grave-men now arrive, and, laid upon a bier, he is carried, all coffinless, to his last resting-place, and laid literally on the shelf, in the vault of his family.

In Paradise he finds the extreme of sensual enjoyment, as a reward for the mortification of the senses in this life; so that his self-denial on earth is only an enlargement of the heroic abstinence of an alderman from luncheon on the day of a city feast. His heavenly hareem consists of 300 Houris, all perfect in loveliness. What chance has his poor wife of being required under such circumstances! It is supposed she has a heaven of her own, in some place or other, but as to *her* substitute for Houris the Koran is silent. In short, in Paradise is to be found every luxury of every appetite, with every concomitant, except satiety and indigestion.

Such is the life, death, and heaven of a modern Egyptian. The description has, I fear, trespassed largely on the patience of the reader, but, fortunately, it applies almost equally to the Syrian and the Constantinopolitan, so that the subject is nearly at an end. One word as to his daily life, and we have done with him for the present.

The respectable part of the community are dressed, and have said their prayers before sunrise. While the father of the family is performing his ablutions (which he does, not for his own, but Mahomet's sake), his wife or slave is filling his pipe. Now he bends his turbaned head to the ground in prayer, and she, the prayerless, stands meekly or demurely by. Fatigued with his devotions, he sinks down, crosslegged, on his cushions, and his last "Allah!" is replaced by the amber mouthpiece of his pipe. How gracefully that Abyssinian girl bends before him, as she serves, with eyes downcast, and arms crossed upon her bosom—that bosom which is never

* The angel Gabriel is the minister of divine vengeance. Azräel receives the parting soul. Israfil sounds the judgment trumpet, and opens the grave at the last day.

to know love, or hope of heaven! The Sheikh (as every man of condition is called in his own house) now raises his eyes, but not to hers. She knows the signal, and presents his little cup of thick coffee, fragrant with ambergris. You hope it may scald the apathetic Moslem, but it seems only to refresh him; as he replaces it in its little silver receptacle, and again resigns himself to repose, this docile hand-maiden disappears through the carved doorway. Soon afterwards, the Sheikh claps his hands, and the silent girl returns with a little tray, on which are eggs and butter and clouted cream. A slave places a little stool, on which this tray is deposited, and the Sheikh breakfasts. Then he has water poured over his hands, and wipes them in a napkin hung from the arm of the slave, who holds the ewer and basin. Now he resumes his pipe once more; and, as this magical instrument is to him instead of ambition, power, love, and glory, the talisman deserves some description. It is made generally of cherrystick for winter use; in summer, they are of jessamine or maple. The tube, which is about four feet long, should be very fresh, the amber mouth-piece as old as claret. I was presented by an Emir, in the Lebanon, with a pipe, whose tube was a rose-branch on which were leaves and buds.

It is now time to set about the business of the day. The Sheikh warms his hands over a chafing-dish of charcoal and frankincense, perfumes his beard and moustaches with civet, and mounts his donkey, which is equipped with a red leather or velvet saddle, and a gaily ornamented bridle. A servant in a blue shirt and red slippers walks before him, calling out to the passengers to clear the way, and another follows with his pipe.

Thus he proceeds to visit, or transact his business, or sit cross-legged in his shop, or to take a bath at the public hamma'ams; all of which proceedings involve constant use of his pipe. At noon, he washes his hands and dines: if very affable, he admits his wives to his table, or, to speak more correctly, to his tray; but, for the most part, he dines alone. There are no knives, forks, or napkins; he helps himself with his fingers, and, if he wishes to honour a guest, he serves him in the same manner. There are thin cakes of bread set before the diner with which he may dip in the dish, and fish up such morsels as he is lucky enough to catch. There is generally a soup, then a number of little bowls, with bits of stewed meat, boiled cucumbers, rissoles of rice wrapped in vine-leaves, mincemeat wrapped in cabbage, or little bits of lamb or mutton roasted on skewers, and called kabobs. A boned fowl, stuffed with every variety of fruit and vegetable, from raisins to parsley; a lamb, stuffed with pistachio-nuts, or a roast fowl, are common dishes; fish, swimming in rancid butter; sweetmeats, set off with honey; and a large dish of plain boiled rice, conclude the entertainment. Then follows sherbet of water, flavoured with bruised raisins and roses, or a water-melon in its stead. Ablutions precede and follow every meal, nor is grace before and after meat ever forgotten. After dinner, he retires to his hareem, where he takes his pipe and coffee, while his wife rubs the soles of his unslippered feet, or sings him to sleep with a low, monotonous song. Afternoon prayer-time recalls him to existence, and, between prayers, and pipes, and supper, he gets through the rest of the day without much difficulty. Sometimes he passes his evening with a game of draughts or chess, or a little lazy chat. Nine o'clock finds him generally retired for the night, or wending his way through the silent streets, preceded by a slave with a lantern. Any person found after dark, without being thus illuminated, is arrested by the police, and probably bastinadoed in the morning. The hour of rest arrived, the rich man lies down on his cotton mattress, which is spread on a slight wooden frame; his servants sleep on the ground, generally in some of the passages: and the houseless, whether from poverty or from desert habits, lie down in the street wherever darkness overtakes them.

I have dwelt thus long on the incidents and character of the Egyptian life, as it concerns us not a little politically as well as otherwise. The relations of his country are becoming daily more involved with those of England, and it concerns us not a little how he lives, acts, and feels, towards his present government. See him reduced from man's proud estate—divested of all interest in the land which is but farmed by a foreign adventurer—excluded from all share in politics—without a ray of freedom to light him onward through thought to action. Within the precincts of his hareem alone he feels himself a man, and there all his thoughts and ambition dwell imprisoned. He dare not mount a horse, lest it should draw upon him the attention of the tax-gatherer or his spies. The descendant of the desert chieftains betakes himself to a donkey, and goes forth to his counter, his only business; or squats in a gloomy coffee-house, his only place of public resort. There he sits and smokes with downcast eyes, unless the voice of the story-teller strikes upon some chord of fancy not yet quite numbed; and, in the adventures of his forefathers, he is made to feel an interest that nothing in his own dull life can waken. Can this man's fate be worse, or can invasion or change of government bring humiliation to this fallen race?

The Turks, or Osmanlis, are of small number, but high consideration, in Egypt. They are to the Arabs what the Normans were to the Irish five hundred years ago—a proud, privileged class, without a sympathy for their vassals, except that which their religion can create. They are, for the most, ignorant of Arabic, considering it beneath them to learn the language of a conquered race. They seem endowed with that power of command, in which the Egyptian is utterly deficient, and occupy all posts of trust throughout the Pasha's provinces. They are also less avaricious than the Egyptians who are placed in authority; and, though their ideas of justice are equally lax, they seldom exercise the same grinding oppression that the Arab inflicts upon his fellow-countryman when in his power.

The Turk is vain, ignorant, presumptuous, and authoritative (I speak of the governors and officers, who are the only Osmanlis of Egypt of whom I have had any experience); yet in society he is courteous, affable, and gentlemanlike. He never, or very rarely, intermarries with Egyptians; and, as it is a well-known fact that children, born of other women in this country, rapidly degenerate or die, there is scarcely an instance of an indigenous Turk in Egypt. Through the long reign of the Mamelukes, there was not one instance, I believe, of a son succeeding to his father's power and possessions. These Mamelukes were young Georgian or Circassian slaves, adopted by their owners, and adopting others in their turn; and this dynasty of foundlings ruled for many years in the land of the Pharaohs. They are now extinct: some few survived the massacre under Mehemet Ali, but they have died away. When I arrived, the last of them was to be seen at Alexandria, with snow-white beard and bent form, and an eye that, in extreme old age, retained all its youthful fire. This last of a persecuting and persecuted race is now at rest, with a turban carved in stone above his tomb.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MAHOMET, AND HIS CREED.

While God was uttering through his lip, and writing with his pen,
Mahommed took his lot with us, a man with other men:
And thus, in our due love to him, and awe for God alone,
We bless his memory as the chest that holds the precious stone. MILNES.

Imposteur à la Mecque, mais Prophète à Médine. VOLTAIRE.

EL ISLAM signifies "resignation," and is the Moslem expression for the Mahometan faith; the exposition of its principles could not have found one more appropriate. I am not about to enter upon any dry, theological discussions, but the whole character of Eastern life is so strongly impregnated by Islamism, that a glance at this faith and its extraordinary founder seems unavoidable.

The star-worship of old times was surely the most natural belief to which the wandering soul could cling. It first revealed itself in those unclouded climes where the host of Heaven is ever visible. The planets especially appeared to preside over Earth's fluctuating fates, and to each was allotted some peculiar ministry by this lofty superstition. The priests were astrologers; and when their influence had passed away, the book in which they read—its page the sky, its letters stars—remained still open, and was still devoutly gazed on. To this moment, an instinct of this faith lingers among the people of the desert, who attribute the rising of the Nile to one, the falling of the miraculous drop that cures the plague and blesses the year to another star; and their destiny to the combination of the host of Heaven: and who can tell how often and how deeply the lonely wanderer has been cheered by the belief that these eyes of heaven were watching over his desert path! Nor is this superstition confined to the Oriental; all those who pass much of their lives under an open midnight sky admit its influence. The sailors who first ventured into the Pacific Ocean observed that a constellation, new to them, was shining over the softened sea like the presence of Him who preached peace to the tempest-tossed. That constellation was in the form of a Cross, and the mariners no longer marvelled that the sea was still. Our own language bears testimony to the hold that astrology obtained amongst our language-makers; and the expression of a "jovial disposition," a "saturnine" or "martial" look, describes those whom Eastern superstition, grafted on northern credulity, believed to be born under the "aspect" of those planets.

Sabaism was the religion of the Arabians when Mahomet appeared. This religious science, that had been cultivated at Babylon, was carefully preserved by those who had nightly experience of its visions, and found utility realizing their abstract faith. If eternity was written in the empyrean, and incorruptibility in the stars, the former was also their harvest-giver, for the Arab proverb says, "Behold, fertility is in the clouds of the sky, not in the clods of the earth!" By the stars they steered their "ships of the desert" along the trackless wastes; and, by

the position of the other planets, traced the movements of their own through spring and harvest.

Upon this star-worship was grafted a wild, vague mythology, that expressed itself in idols. This must have been a very complicated theology, for we find Mahomet, in one iconoclasm, destroying three hundred and sixty of its stony saints that had occupied the temple of the Caaba in peace till then.* This temple was in existence before the Christian era, and contained the black stone that fell from heaven, on which Jacob dreamed.

Scattered among the Sabeans were many Christians and Jews; the latter principally emigrants from Syria when under the scourge of Titus the avenger; the former, the converts of the Jacobite and Nestorian bishops. The professors of these two creeds bore the name of "People of the Book," or of the Bible; and, if the Christians were tolerated, the Jews were even cherished, by the Arabs, who rejoiced to find in the story of the Hebrew patriarchs the ancient origin of the fathers of their nation. They respected Abraham as a just man, and one who dwelt in tents; but they adored Ishmael, whose life they found themselves imitating.

Then came Mahomet. He was of the tribe of Koreish, and the family of Hashem, the most illustrious of the Arabs, princes of Mecca, and hereditary guardians of the Caaba. It is curious that the controversial Christians, themselves the followers of the poor fishermen, who were yet the ambassadors of God, endeavoured to injure his cause by stating that he was of humble origin. Noble he was, and therefore less wonderful his rise; and his father Abdallah was so popular, that two hundred and three virgins are said to have expired of despair on the day of his nuptials with Amina, a daughter of the noble race of the Zahrites. Mahomet, the only issue of this marriage, at an early age found himself an orphan and a ward of his avaricious uncles. The result of Arabian chancery would argue them to be a civilized people even then, for, on coming of age, he received five camels and a slave as his sole remnant of a noble inheritance. "In the lowly valley grow the mighty trees," says the Arab proverb, and in poverty that soul grew strong which was to influence the world. He first tried his hand and head at trade, wherein he prospered, and then he married Cadijah, the wealthiest widow in Mecca.

He had now time to look round on mankind, and to study his fellow-countrymen. He found their prejudices and affections divided between the idolatrous faith of their forefathers, the doctrine of the Jews so gratifying to their worldly pride, and the more spiritual creed of even the Arabian Christian, which invited them to self-denial in the present, by the promise of a glorious future.

Mahomet took the iron, and brass, and gold, of these respective systems, and fused them into a bronze image of himself. He asserted, and the Eastern world at length believed, that he alone could reconcile the discrepancies, fulfil all the requisitions, and complete the scheme of the world's divided faith. The Arab wanted but a leader, Mahomet wanted but to lead, and his was the energetic, self-loyal, indomitable spirit that could do it effectually. For seven years he struggled through contempt, and jealousy, and danger, as resolutely as the swimmer, who knows that he must reach the shore—or die. His claim to divinity and his warlike spirit acted and reacted on each other. Did his followers faint under the burning sunshine of the desert? "Hell is much hotter" was at once his sermon and his bulletin; did the threats and the power of the unbelieving Koreishites induce even his devoted followers to remonstrate? "If they should place the sun on my right hand, and the moon upon my left, they should not divert me from my course," was the vaunt of one who felt himself superior to fate, or the maker of his own.

When his assassination was determined on at Mecca, and each of the tribes devoted a sword to share his blood, he retired to the desert with only one companion; but he was not then less the leader than when he unrolled his turban in another exigency, as the banner for 10,000 men:—"We are but two," said Abubeker, the companion of his flight, as their pursuers were approaching; "We are three," said Mahomet, "for God is with us;"—just then a pigeon nestled at the door of the cave in which they were concealed, and the pursuers passed on unsuspectingly.

It was not enough for Mahomet that he escaped on this occasion; he had the bold assurance to date the triumph of his mission from that day; and all over the East, "The Hegira," or *The Flight*, is the glorious epoch from which the Believer reckons time.

Medina received the Prophet as such, and is consecrated as the place of his burial, as Mecca of his birth. Thenceforth he and his creed triumphed together; the head that would not be converted fell upon the field of battle, and the curved sabre was the true effigy of the Crescent.

The deceiving spirit, which wore the form of Mahomet, might perhaps have numbered

* Some say there were only two idols here, Abraham and Nimrod.

itself among the victims of its imposture. A believer in metempsychosis might suspect that, in a less powerful form, it assumed the appearance of the Caliph Hakeem, and the prophet Mokanna; and Cromwell himself might appear but another manifestation of the same spirit, adapted to the enlightened spiritual and political times in which he lived.

In the history of the world, however, there is no character that can bear comparison with that of Mahomet, for the daring and originality of his views (however they might have altered or expanded with success), or with the sustained and almost superhuman energy with which he carried them out, in defiance, though apparently by the assistance of God and man.

In two instances, especially, he displayed a reliance on himself or his destiny, inconceivable to ordinary minds. It was not only that he preached his divine mission in times of security, and promised Paradise in time of peace; but in the hour of battle, when all seemed lost, when death appeared inevitable, and when the soldier's courage was of no more avail; then started forth the power and the resources of the daring soul, and the impostor authoritatively called on God to send His angels to assist him; and—strange to say, those angels came—they came in the shape of Hope to his friends, and Panic to his foes. The Prophet's life was saved, and his faith became immortal.

Again, in the more trying hour of illness and decay, when the glow of battle and of bravery was over, and the light of the past was quenched in the darkening future, and his dissolution was close at hand, and kindred and believers had assembled round his carpet to see their Prophet die, he held out unfalteringly for his divine mission; his last act was to dictate the substance of a recent revelation from his friend the angel Gabriel, and his last words were, "God! I come to Thee!"

In the cavern near Mecca, where the pigeon had sheltered him from the Koreishites, he compiled that Koran, which displayed such wonderful knowledge of human nature, at least of Eastern human nature. These revelations were written by his disciples on shoulder-blades of mutton and on palm-leaves, and the chapters, both animal and vegetable, were placed indiscriminately in a chest, belonging to one of his wives. It was not until two years after the death of the Prophet that these writings were transcribed and collected into a volume by Abubeker, the successor of the divine editor.

It is the fashion of the illuminated minds of the present day to find out wonders of eloquence, and novelty, and meaning, in what that dull race of men, our forefathers, found trite, or bombastic, or obscure. The Koran is now eulogized by Europeans, in terms that might make a Moslem conceited, yet I am free to confess that, having laboured through "its incoherent rhapsodies,"* from the chapter of the "Cow" to that of "Men," I am only astonished at the strength of fanaticism that could distil meaning or a faith out of its incoherent pages.

I will not attempt to enter into the doctrines that Mahomet inculcated, either in this Koran, or in the Sonna, or oral law. Its leading principles are prayer, alms, and fasting; the first brings the Moslem half-way to God; the second to the door of his palace; and the third obtains him admittance. Cleanliness is the key to prayer, and the purity of the body must typify that of the mind—perhaps it does: nevertheless, the Moslem is the filthiest of mankind, though he washes his hands and beard three times a day. Abstinence and fasting are rigidly enjoined, but there is no limit to the hareem. Charity involves at least a tenth of the Moslem's income being spent in alms: there are, moreover, parochial institutions for destitute dogs, and asylums for houseless cats; yet the Moslem will cheat his father, if his father does not anticipate him; and woe to the orphan or the stranger who is dependent on a Moslem's honesty, or the justice of a Cadi's court!

This dishonesty, it is true, is not to be laid to the account of the Koran's precepts directly; but when that Koran jesuitically justifies falsehood towards enemy or even wife, veracity ceases to exist, and integrity of conduct cannot long survive.

It is true that the most religious Moslem is at best a Pharisee; that he is only religious towards his co-religionists; that there is nothing Catholic in his faith; that, with all his abstinence, sensuality is allowed; that his paradise is one of gluttony and eye-delight; yet Mahometanism claims the first and highest place amongst uninspired religions. It proclaimed the Unity of God, and inculcated entire resignation to His will. In its passive quality, it was eminently the religion of endurance; in its active quality, it was, beyond all other, the religion of conquest. Intended as a menstruum in which all other faiths were to be fused, it endeavoured to conciliate the Jew by adopting the patriarchs; the Sabean, by admitting geni and starry intelligences; the corrupt Christianity, which it encountered, by asserting the divine mission of Christ, the existence of Purgatory, and of a Paraclete, which was Mahomet himself.

* Gibbon.

It is to be observed that Mahometanism is much more latitudinarian in Egypt than in Syria, Asia Minor, and Persia; yet even here, the devoutness of its professors, and the universality of its operation is very striking, and has given rise to the following eloquent observations by a recent author: "For my own part, I never experienced a stronger impression than the first day I spent in a Mahometan country; it is like returning at one step to the old dispensation; to the condition of mankind, standing, without mediation, without sympathy, alone, beneath the will and might of God. There the whole of life goes on in the distinct presence of the Invisible; there prayer is no mental process, but a plain act of dutiful service, a mere obedience of the laws and conditions of existence; there reverence is the distinction between man and the inferior animals; and the scoffer and the scorner would be rebels against the common sense and decency of mankind.*

Mahometanism was the child of the sword, the soldier was its priest; its existence depended upon its advancement: when it stood still, it languished. Strictly Eastern in the rites, and the habits of thought that it prescribed, it never was adapted to advance amongst a northern people. Had Mahomet succeeded in conciliating the Jews, it would have materially altered the character of the East, by consolidating their strenuous character with that of the volatile Arab, and rendering uniform the Eastern faith. It is evident that his keen vision perceived the importance of the conversion of the Jews, and perhaps he was led towards their creed by his zeal for the unity of the Deity and his abhorrence of idolatry. But the descendant of Ishmael, of whose pure blood the Koreish prided themselves in being, was never to coalesce with the children of the Promise. "Thy hand against theirs," was not spoken in vain three thousand years before; and was fulfilled when the children of Abraham scornfully rejected even to the death, amalgamation with the Ishmaelite. Had they done otherwise, in all human probability would Jerusalem have been restored, and the Hebrews become once more a people; but a mightier hand pointed to a different issue. The same obstinacy that had rejected the Son of Heaven incurred the hatred of his foe; and the Jew is devoted by Mahomet to destruction in this world, and damnation in the next. Spiritual warfare found no arena in the minds of the combatants. The fanaticism of the Koran never came into mental collision with the fierce faith that chivalry had evolved from the Gospel of Peace.

But even the conversion of the Jews to Islamism would not have altered the relations of the Moslem with Christendom, or made any difference in the result of the battle of Tours. It would, perhaps, be bigotry to ascribe to Christianity, such as was then practised, the check that the Saracens experienced in Europe; but the vehement and firm will and iron vigour of the Norman prevailed over the wild enthusiasm and unconnected activity of the Oriental. However strong in numbers and powerful in resources, every expedition of the Saracen was a mere expansion of the foray of an Arab tribe. The Moor was, as he described himself, a thunderbolt of war, but the cloud that bore it must move on, or be dissolved. When the Moslem reached France on the south, and Hungary on the east, he encountered that stern northern race to whom the conquest of the world seems allotted. Baffled and thrown back on Barbary and the Bosphorus, the tide of Islam, that must ever either flow or ebb, had turned. From that hour, it began to shrink, and is now rapidly subsiding into the narrow channel whence it overflowed.

Would that we could find a pure and uniform faith following upon its retiring tide, as the harvest pursues the receding Nile! As yet there appears little probability of such a result; but come what may, it is consolatory to believe that the opened eyes and expanded hearts of men will never more submit to the Moslems' creed, in whose path has followed like its shadow, oppression, insecurity, poverty, and intolerance.

It is not, however, by conversion, that Islamism is on the decline. "Moslem once, Moslem ever," is a proverb among the Greeks. His very being is identified with his faith; it is interwoven with every action of his life; it is the source of all his pride, hope, and comfort. Amongst us, too generally, our religion "is of our life a thing apart:" with the Moslem it seems inseparable.

Inquire of the historian, the traveller, or even of the missionary, what number of conversions have taken place among that people on whose soul, from their very infancy, the faith of the Prophet and the scorn of the Christian seems stamped indelibly, and they will answer—None. It is only, then, with a failing population that this war faith seems to fail — *ubi solitudinem, pacem.* Then comes the Greek, or the Roman Catholic, or

* *Palm Leaves.* By R. M. Milnes. Though I have ventured, in some respects, to differ from the conclusions that this clear-headed and graceful writer has formed upon this and other subjects, I must bear my willing testimony to the true Oriental spirit and character of the eloquent little volume from which I have often quoted in these pages.

the Jew, who multiply apace; and the same belief in destiny that once carried the Moslem over the world irresistibly, now bids him submit to extinction or emigration.

The Egyptian Moslem presents all the evil results of his religion in a striking manner, with little admixture of its better qualities, except the resignation, the hospitality, and courteousness that it enjoins; to which must be added, respect to gray hairs and filial reverence. The numbers of the Moslem in Egypt is 1,750,000, including Turks and Nubians.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE COPTS—THE MISSIONARIES.

Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to man, benighted,
The Lamp of Life deny?

BISHOP HEBER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the general interest that prevails on matters connected with the Church, that of Africa has for a long time obtained but little consideration. And yet its creed has been as zealously fought for, preached, and suffered for, as any of its theologic brethren. From the busy port of Alexandria to the lonely mountains of Abyssinia, this section of the Church has borne testimony to such truth as it possessed, for 1800 years, according to its own professors; for thirteen centuries, according to the theologians.

The African Church claims descent from St. Mark, as that of Rome from St. Peter. In such state as Eutyches and Jacobus left her, she has maintained her integrity unimpaired through all the political vicissitudes that Egypt has undergone.

I would fain devote a chapter to the first ages of this church, to the stirring and romantic career of Athanasius, and the hermit enthusiasm of St. Anthony; but I feel myself confined to generalities, and such details as even these that I permit myself are ill adapted to a work like this.

The Copts claim, and are generally admitted, to be descendants of the ancient Egyptians, and this claim seems substantiated by the strong likeness that the portraits of the ancient tombs bear to the Jacobite Egyptian of the present day.*

* Gibbon observes that the climate of Nubia was too strong for Christianity; was it not rather the Arab sword of extermination in the first instance; and the Turkish invasion, under Selim, in the second, which eradicated the last vestige of the Nubian Christians in the sixteenth century?

Nubia belonged to this profession until about the twelfth century, since when it has been Mahometan; and Abyssinia is therefore now isolated in its Christianity.*

The church of Alexandria was not a little proud of giving a Patriarch, or rather a Metropolitan, to this remote region, and drew such glowing pictures of its illustrious suffragans, that Portugal sent a Jesuit mission to convert these prosperous and powerful heretics. After a great deal of controversy and bloodshed, however, Abyssinia shook off the Jesuits and their faith, and returned to the Coptic or Jacobite profession, to which they still adhere.

There are about 150,000 persons of this creed in Egypt, so they would seem to have increased since the time in which Gibbon wrote of them; although it is said that considerable numbers annually become apostate to the Moslem creed, for the sake of marriage, or money, or both.

These Copts differ little in appearance from the rest of the population in the fashion of their dress, except that they affect dark colours in their turbans and their robes. This gloomy garb suits their saturnine and melancholy countenances, in which the history of their persecuted race is plainly written.

The head of their church is called the Patriarch of Alexandria. He is selected from amongst the monks of St. Anthony, who inhabit a convent in the Arabian desert, not far from the Red Sea.

Their convents are very numerous, and, except for the greater length and severity of their fasts, they differ little in their rules from those of the Roman Catholics. The priests are allowed to marry, however, though their brides must be virgins, and, if these should die, no second marriage is allowed to the widower. They reject the use of images in their churches, but they are very proud of their pictures. The services are read in the obsolete Coptic language, which is seldom understood by the priests, and never by the people. The sacrament is administered in both elements, and confession is encouraged but not insisted on.

Balanced thus nearly between the Latin and the Greek churches, they have also many observances that partake of the Mecca ritual. They retain their turbans, but take off their slippers, on entering the house of prayer;

* "Le terme Arabe, un 'Cophte,' me semble une altération évidente du Grec Αιγυπτος, *un Egyptien;* car on doit remarquer que y était prononcé *ou* chez les anciens Grecs; et que les Arabes, n'ayant ni g devant a o u—ni la lettre *p*, remplacent toujours ces lettres par g et b; les Cophtes sont donc proprement les représentans des Egyptiens."—*Volney.*

they abstain from swines' flesh, and animals that have not been killed with the knife. The women pray in a different part of the church from the men. I was struck by one curious coincidence in their language: on inquiring the name of their longest fast, I was told that it was called *Lint*.

The ancient language has been supposed to be that which the gipsies now use, but Mr. Lieder, who has carefully studied both, informs me that Sanscrit is the only tongue to which the latter bears any analogy, and that the Coptic has no living relations.

The Copts have a very indifferent character, even in Egypt, where they are considered deceitful, sensual, and avaricious: nevertheless, they have been in all times extensively employed as scribes and accountants by the more ignorant Egyptian and Osmanli; and at present they fill most of the revenue departments in the Pasha's offices. They are not subject to conscription for military service, but they only owe this privilege to contempt in the eyes of the Moslems, who would not admit them to the honourable chance of being slain in the cause of the Prophet.

The Copts are very industrious, and exercise various trades according to their localities. Thus, in Cairo, they are generally jewellers and tailors; in the Fayoum, they make rose-water and other perfumes; at Siout, they make linen, and eunuchs, which latter branch of industry is said to be a monopoly of the priests.*

Such is the material upon which our missionaries have to labour, for among the Moslems their efforts are admitted to be all but hopeless. Mr. Kruse† and Mr. Lieder have made persevering and exemplary efforts in their calling, and, as they have brought greater energies and abilities to the task than most other missionaries, their labours have been proportionably more successful.

The Coptic patriarch is on the best terms with Mr. Lieder, calls him his "father," allows and encourages the Coptic children to attend the missionary schools, and sanctions the circulation of the Scriptures and Church of England tracts amongst his flock.

These are great privileges, and they appear to be deserved by the tact and temperance with which Mr. Lieder has availed himself of them. Mehemet Ali also encourages the missionary schools, and has upwards of 200 of its scholars in his employment. There were about ninety boys at the school when I visited it; an ugly ophthalmic set they were, dressed in blue shirts and red caps. But a far deeper interest than mere eyesight could receive was excited by the contemplation of these poor children, bending with Arab eagerness over the books, whence they were allowed to imbibe truth, for the first, and, perhaps, for the last time in their lives.

They acquire the first rudiments of knowledge, as also the creed and the Lord's Prayer, by chanting in chorus, as in our infant schools.

At twelve o'clock, a bell rang, and all the little swarthy creatures, rushing out into the courtyard, ranged themselves on benches to receive their dinner from the charity of the Church Missionary Society. I wish the London sight-seers could look upon this little congregation, educated and nourished, and reclaimed from misery and ignorance, by the active charity of those who, although three thousand miles away in their own happy and favoured land, do not forget the claims of these poor brethren upon their sympathy and their assistance.*

The food was simple enough, dates and coarse bread; but it was a luxury to those who thankfully received it. These are, for the most part, children of beggars, "who have the gospel preached unto them." The missionaries do not attempt to make proselytes, but content themselves with teaching truth, and leaving it to assume its own form as to creed. There is also a girls' school, for which no Egyptian teacher could be found: not one woman in all the land could read or write, except a daughter of Mehemet Ali's, who is very accomplished. A Maronite lady was therefore invited from Mount Lebanon, who seems to discharge her difficult duty well, and her little pupils appeared eager and anxious to improve.

It is a great inducement to the Egyptian women to send their daughters to these schools, that they there learn the Western style of embroidery, which is greatly prized in the East. Mrs. Lieder is a frequent visitor in the Pasha's hareem, where they even invited her to take up her abode permanently.

These schools of Cairo afford altogether a very cheerful aspect to an English eye: and

* Clot Bey, tome i., p. 336.

† Mr. Kruse is now gone to reside in Upper Egypt, at Siout. There is a considerable Coptic population there, but a scene of sterner trial, in every point of view, can scarcely be imagined than this brave man has ventured upon.

* I would beg to direct the attention of those who are interested in the welfare of these missions to that excellent institution, the Medical Relief Mission, as established at Beyrout. There it has been productive of infinite good, and Cairo would appear to be a station especially adapted for its establishment, from the wide extent of physical suffering, the want of medical advice, and the excellent results of making a prejudiced people grateful, and inclined to look up to those who have the means of distributing more than physical solace.

it is a gratifying duty to bear this impartial testimony to their utility and good conduct. Attached to the schools is a neat chapel, wherein the service of our church is performed. The congregation was very small, compared with the number of English at Cairo. The latter seem to succumb, for the most part, to the fatal influence of this voluptuous climate, and, with some admirable exceptions, do little credit to the proud character of their country.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MAGIC—MAGNETISM.

Oh, never rudely will I blame his faith
In the might of stars and angels: 'tis not merely
The human being's pride that peoples space
With life and mystical predominance.

SCHILLER.

Sleep on! sleep on! forget thy pain;
My hand is on thy brow—
My spirit on thy brain;
And from my healing fingers flow
The powers of life; and, like a sign,
Seal thee from thine hour of woe.

SHELLEY.

EGYPT has been in all ages the reputed stronghold of magic and of mystery. She was the immediate inheretrix of the knowledge, the arts, and the sciences, which flowed into other lands, with their possessors, from the concentrated wisdom of the world on the Babel Dispersion. As far as we can penetrate into the dim Past by the light of conjecture, the mightiest mass of humanity parted thence into two great streams: the one expanding into India; the other into Abyssinia, Ethiopia, and finally into the land of Egypt.

The powers with which the early race of man was endowed seem never to have been wholly lost; at all events, they lingered for centuries under the tent of the Chaldean, and the caverns of Africa. The grandsons of Adam were skilled in sciences which the world in these latter ages has only begun to obtain a knowledge of; and in the days when angels mingled their blood with that of earth, intellectual power and art probably attained a height from which they continued to fall for four thousand years, and to which they can never rise again. In the busy and distracting life consequent on the universal emigration from Babel, much of this knowledge was undoubtedly lost, as, being oral, it was the first to suffer from the confusion of tongues; but Astronomy still kept her watch on the starlit plains of Chaldea; Architecture wrought her wonders at Carli, Ipsambul, and stupendous Thebes; and Magic cherished its mysteries in the caverns of Dakke, Ekmim, and Domdaniel.

The Egyptian priests seem long to have retained somewhat of the ancient superhuman knowledge; but, being purely traditional, it was at any time liable to contract or expire under the jealous guardianship of some high priest, who wished to be the last of his power. In the mysteries of Isis, some of the great secrets were darkly shadowed forth; and enough has already been discovered, in the hierophantic walls of her ancient temples, to prove the intimacy of their authors with subjects of which the wise men of our day are just beginning to obtain glimpses, amongst others, that of Freemasonry, which is now little more, with us, than a convivial bond.

Magnetism also appears to have been well understood by the Egyptian hierarchy; not only from some of the effects we find recorded, but, in one of the chambers, whose hieroglyphics are devoted to medical subjects, we find a priest in the very act of that Mesmerism which is pretended to have been discovered a few years ago. The patient is seated in a chair, while the operator describes the mesmeric passes, and an attendant waits behind to support the head when it has bowed in the mysterious Sleep.

But to return to magic. Moses was well skilled in this, as well as in all the other "learning of the Egyptians;" and when he professed miracles to Pharaoh, the latter sent to Dakke and to Ekmim for magicians to oppose him. Their power seems to have been real, though, like that of Elymas in later times, it served only as a foil to the mightier works of the Divine missionary.

When the Israelites were come out of Egypt they had become so imbued with magical practices that we find them forbidden upon pain of death; yet, four hundred years afterwards, Saul found a witch at Endor, and books have been written upon Solomon's necromancies. The study of magic is still followed in Egypt, as it has always been. Caviglia told Lord Lindsay that he had pursued it to the bounds of what was lawful for man to know; and M. Preiss, an eminent antiquarian, is now deeply engaged in the same pursuit.

There are many professors of magic among the natives of Cairo; and these are not to be confounded with jugglers, of whom there are also considerable numbers, and who have as little connection with the former as the chandler has with the astronomer. The most remarkable of the magicians is the Sheikh Abdel-Kader Maugrabee, who has been introduced to English notice by Lord Prudhoe, Mr. Salt, Mr. Lane, Lord Lindsay, and several other writers. None of these travellers were men likely to lend themselves to a deception, yet they were all more or less convinced of the reality of this magician's

pretensions. His performances have been even discussed at length by *The Quarterly Review*.

On my arrival in Cairo, I found some difficulty in inducing him to come to my hotel, as he had been recently kicked downstairs by a party of young Englishmen, for a failure in his performances. At length, through the kindness of our consul, I procured a visit from him one evening. He was rather a majestic-looking old man, though he required the imposing effect of his long grey beard and wide turban to counteract the disagreeable expression of his little twinkling eyes. I had a pipe and coffee served to him, and he discoursed without reserve upon the subject of his art, in which he offered to instruct me. After some time, a boy of about twelve years old was brought in, and the performance began. He took the child's right hand in his, and described a square figure on its palm, on which he wrote some Arabic characters: while this was drying, he wrote upon a piece of paper an invocation to his familiar Spirits, which he burnt with some frankincense in a brazier at his feet. For a moment, a white cloud of fragrant smoke enveloped him and the cowering child who sate before him, but it had entirely dissipated before the phantasms made their appearance. Then, taking the boy's hand in his, he poured some ink into the hollow of it, and began to mutter rapidly; his countenance assumed an appearance of intense anxiety, and the perspiration stood upon his brow: occasionally he ceased his incantations, to inquire if the boy saw anything; and, being answered in the negative, he went on more vehemently than before. Meanwhile, the little Arab gazed on the inky globule in his hand with an eager and fascinated look, and at length exclaimed, "I see them now!" Being asked what he saw, he described a man sweeping with a brush, soldiers, a camp, and, lastly, the sultan. The magician desired him to call for flags, and he described several, of various colours, as coming at his call. When a red flag made its appearance, the magician said the charm was complete, and that we might call for whom we pleased. Sir Henry Hardinge was the first person asked for; and, after some seconds' delay, the boy exclaimed, "He is here!" He described him as a little man in a black dress, white cravat, and yellow (perhaps grey) hair. I asked him if he had both *legs*. Alas! he declared he had only one. I then asked for Lord E——n. He described him as a very fine, *long* man, with green glass over his eyes, dressed in black, and always bending forward. I then asked for Lablache, who appeared as a little, young man, with a straw hat: the Venus de Medici represented herself as a young lady, with a bonnet and a green veil—and the boy was turned out.

We then got an intelligent little negro slave, belonging to the house. The magician did not seem to like him much, but went through all the former proceedings over again; during which the actors formed a very picturesque group; the anxious magician, with his long yellow robes; the black child, with his red tarboosh, white tunic, glittering teeth, and bead-like eyes, gazing earnestly into his dark little hand. The dragoman held a candle, whose light shone vividly on the child, the old man, and his own fine figure; his black beard and moustache contrasting with those of the hoary necromancer, as did his blue and crimson dress with the pale drapery of the other. Picturesqueness, however, was the only result. The boy insisted that he could see nothing; though his starting eye-balls showed how anxiously he strove to do so. The hour was so late that no other boys were to be found; and so the séance broke up.

When he was gone I asked my dragoman, Mahmoud (who had been dragoman to Lord Prudhoe during both his visits to Egypt), what he thought of the magician. He said, he considered him rather a humbug than otherwise; but added, that there certainly was *something in it*. He said, not only did Lord Prudhoe believe in the magic, but that Mrs. L——, a most enterprising traveller, whom he had once attended, had some ink put into her hand, and that she clearly saw the man with the brush, the soldiers, and the camp, though she could see no more. He told me that the people of Cairo believed the Sheikh had made a league with the "genti a basso," and that he himself believed him to be anything but a santon. A friend of mine at Alexandria said that he knew an Englishman who had learnt the art, and practised it with success; and a lady mentioned to me that a young female friend of hers had tried the experiment, and had been so much terrified by the first apparition, that she had fainted, and could not be induced to try it again.

I have gone into these details as I know that the subject has excited a good deal of interest, and have only to add my own impression that, whatever powers this man may have formerly possessed, the sceptic may indulge largely in unbelief as to any supernatural aid that he receives at present.

I was not surprised to find that magnetism has its professors in Egypt, and that it had been practised from all time in this dreamy and mystical land. The climate seems particularly favourable to the development of its phenomena, and we may easily conceive what

effects it must have produced on the lively imagination of this superstitious people, when it can puzzle and astonish in the midst of London. In the old time, priest and doctor were synonymous, and the work of the latter was attributed to the influence of the former character. Their temples were placed in smiling and lonely places, where the imagination of the patient or the proselyte was gradually prepared to receive the desired impression on their bodies or their minds, or the one was made to act upon the other. As I have mentioned before, in one of the chambers of the tombs is found a magnetizing priest under the figure of Anubis; one of his hands is raised above the head of the sick person, and the other is on his breast. When priestcraft began to wane in Egypt, magnetism, amongst other of its instruments, seems to have passed over into Greece, and the Pythoness perhaps directed the politics of the world by her revelations when in the ecstatic state of clairvoyance. A very intelligent French physician in the Pasha's service, whom I met on the Nile, pointed out to me a curious passage in Plautus, which seems to imply that magnetism was not unknown to the Romans. *Amphytr.* sc. 1. Mercurius et Sosia. *Mer.* "Quod si ego illum *tractim* tangam ut dormiat?" *Sos.* "Servaveris, nam continuas has tres noctes pervigilavi." The same person told me that he believed great and extensive benefit might be produced by the use of magnetism, in Egypt particularly, where every constitution seems subject to its influences; while in France and England its action is chiefly confined to the more delicate and finer organizations of mind and body.

When the brilliant but credulous minds of the Arabians began to exercise an influence in Europe, facts borrowed an energy and vitality from fancies, that made men zealous as they would never otherwise have been. Astronomy would have been too practical and abstruse for those busy and material times; but, wrapt in the robes of astrology, it was eagerly followed. Thus also chemistry prevailed through alchymy, and medicine through magic. As Avicenna, and the few Arab writers on pathology, present us chiefly with results, and the publications of those times were intended only for the initiated, the obscurity of their means can only be penetrated by conjecture, based on the causes that present similar results at present. We find that epilepsy, derangement, and many other disorders dependent on the nervous system, were cured by the Egyptian priests. Yet medicine seems to have been little understood, and surgery unknown. Moral medicine, however, acted, and no doubt acts at this day, with great facility on the imaginative Arabs, predisposing them to magnetic influences. I never look at an Oriental, seated on his little carpet, smoking his chibouque and apparently sharing in the trance that seems to wrap all nature that surrounds him, without thinking of a magnetic séance. The long shadows of the palm are lying moveless on the grass; the very mimosa has no trembling; the river floats languidly among the lotus lilies; the pyramids look immovable as the mountains of nature; the camels scarcely chew the cud; the sunshine itself seems sleepy; repose appears the only real pleasure of all life. Is not this a magnetic land?

## CHAPTER XVI.

### LIFE UPON THE NILE—MEMPHIS.

Smooth went our boat along the summer seas,
Leaving—for so it seemed—a world behind,
Its cares, its sounds, its shadows; we reclined
Upon the sunny deck, heard but the breeze
That whispered through the palms, or idly played
With the lithe flag aloft—a forest scene
On either side drew its slope line of green,
And hung the water's edge with shade.
Above thy woods, Memphis!—pyramids pale
Peered as we passed; and Nile's soft azure hue,
Gleaming 'mid the grey desert, met the view;
Where hung at intervals the scarce seen sail.
Oh! were this little boat to us the world,
And thus we wandered far from sounds of care,
Circled with friends, and gentle maidens fair,
While southern airs the waving pennant curled,
How sweet were life's long voyage, till in peace
We gained that haven still, where all things cease!
(Altered from) BOWLES.

READER! whoever you are, you may one day be induced to change the feverish life of Europe, with all its perplexing enjoyments, its complicated luxuries, and its manifold cares, for the silence, the simplicity, and the freedom of a life on the desert and the river. Has society palled upon you? Have the week-day struggles of the world made you wish for some short sabbath of repose? Has our coarse climate chafed your lungs, and do they require the soothing of balmily-breathing breezes?—Come away to the Nile! Has love, or hate, or ambition, or any other ephemeral passion, ruffled up a storm in your butterboat of existence? Here you will find that calm counsellor Egeria—whose name is Solitude. Have the marvellous stories of the old world sunk into your soul, and do you seek for their realization? Or have mere curiosity and the spirit of unrest driven you forth to wander *à l'Anglais*, as a man takes a walk on a dreary day for the pleasure of returning from it?—Come away to the Nile! Here are sunshines that are never clouded, and fragrant airs as gentle as a maiden's

whisper, instead of northern gales that howl round you as if you were an old battlement. Here are nights all a-glow with stars, and a crescent moon, that seems bowing to you by courtesy, not bent double by rheumatism. Here is no money to be lost or gained, no letters to disturb into joy or sorrow, none of the wear and tear and petty details of life. You never hear the sound of your native tongue, and somehow men don't talk, and therefore don't think, so lightly when they have to translate their thoughts into a strange language. In a word, here is the highest species of monastic retirement. You stand apart from the world; you see its inhabitants so widely differing from yourself in their appearance, their habits, their hopes, and their fears, that you are enabled to look upon man in the abstract, to study his phenomena without prejudice. As you recede from Europe further and further on, towards the silent regions of the Past, you live more and more in that Past; the river over which you glide, the desert, the forest, the very air you breathe, are calm; the temples in their awful solitudes, the colossal statues, the tombs, with their guardian sphinxes, all are profoundly calm; and at length even our island restlessness softens down, and merges into the universal peace around.

* * * * *

Cairo! for the present, farewell. It was late when I issued from the gates, but it was impossible to be in a hurry on such an evening, and on such a spot. The distance between the modern metropolis and the river was once occupied by Babylon, and is now broken by many a mound and chasm the distorted features of a city that has died a violent death.

The metropolism of Egypt had an uneasy life of it. To say nothing of its youth at Thebes, it has wandered about Lower Egypt, as if it were a mere encampment. Under the name of Memphis, it remained for some time on the western bank of the river. It fled from Nebuchadnezzar to the opposite side under the "alias" of Babylon; paid a visit to Alexandria under the Ptolemies; and returned to Babylon, where it was besieged by Amrou. A dove built its nest in the tent of the Saracen general, and he, who had ruthlessly ravaged and laid waste the dwellings of man, would not disturb the domestic arrangements of a little bird. Babylon was taken, but he ordered a new city to be built from its ruins on the site where this dove sat hatching. Thus Fostat* became the metropolis of Egypt. The nomad instinct was too strong for its repose, however, and under the Fatimites it was obliged to start again, and remove to its present position, where it dwells under the name of Misr el Kahira, "the victorious city," or, in plain English, Grand Cairo. There are some remains of these former cities still existing, among which is a fine aqueduct, and some buildings called Joseph's Granaries, which are still used for that purpose. I paused under the shadow of their walls, waiting for the camels to arrive with the boat stores; the carpet was instantly spread, the pipe instantly offered, and in a few minutes I perceived the fragrance of the boiling coffee, which I believe our dragoman carried in his pocket, pot and all; for I never rested for five minutes on the river or the desert that that same coffee-pot was not bubbling before me. Mahmoud was ever as ready with his tales as with his coffee; and when, by a gesture, I had asked for some account of these granaries, he proceeded, with much gesticulating, to describe them, finishing with the following anecdote:—

"Some hundred years ago there was a great scarcity of corn in Egypt; the people were daily perishing of want; yet some avaricious merchants hoarded up their stock until it became worth its weight in gold. Among these was an old miser named Amin, who had filled one of "Joseph's Granaries" at the last plenteous harvest. Day by day, as the famine wasted his fellow-citizens, he sat upon the steps of his corn-store, speculating on their sufferings, and calculating how he could make the utmost usury out of God's bounty. At length there was no more corn elsewhere; famishing crowds surrounded his storehouse, and besought him, as a charity, to give them a little food for all their wealth. Gold was piled around him; the miser's soul was satisfied with the prospect of boundless riches. Slowly he unclosed his iron doors, when lo! he recoils, blasted and terror-stricken, from his treasury. Heaven had sent the worm into his corn, and, instead of piles of yellow wheat, he gazed on festering masses of rottenness and corruption. Starving as the people were, they raised a shout of triumph at the manifest judgment; but Amin heard it not—he had perished in his hour of evil pride."

* * * * *

The sun was setting behind the Pyramids when I embarked; but night and day made little difference in this country, and the former is only associated with the idea of rest when it happens to be too dark to see. It was bright moonlight as I mustered our swarthy crew on the river's edge. Their countenances were full of hope and eagerness; and, when their inspection was concluded, each kissed my hand and placed it on his head, in sign of devotion and fidelity. Their dress was

* A tent.

principally a pair of loose cotton drawers reaching to the knee, a long blue shirt, and the red cloth cap called a "tarboosh," which, on state occasions, is wound round with a white turban by the lower classes. The crew consisted of a rais, or captain, a pilot, and eight rowers, whom, with one exception, we found good-humoured, faithful, honest, and affectionate fellows. Two servants completed the equipment. One of these, named Mahmoud, has the well-deserved character of being the best dragoman in Egypt. He had none of the indolence of his race; always actively employed, his song was never silent except when exchanged for conversation; strikingly handsome, keen, and intelligent, he had unbounded influence over the crew, and was welcomed eagerly by peasant and governor wherever we landed. From Cairo to the depths of Nubia, he seemed intimately acquainted not only with every locality, but with every individual along the river. He had accompanied Lord Prudhoe on both his expeditions into the interior of Africa, and spoke of him with gratitude and enthusiasm.

Now the cable is loosed, a long towing-line is drawn along the shore by the sailors; the pilot perches himself on the spar-deck; the rais squats at the bow; and the Nile ripples round our prow, as we start on a two months' voyage, with as little ceremony as if only crossing the river in a ferry-boat. Palms, palaces, and busy crowds glide by; the river bends, and the wind becomes favourable, the sailors wade or swim on board, enormous sails fall from the long spars, like two wide unfolding wings; the union-jack floats from the poop, and our private flag from the lofty spars; the pyramids of Gizeh on our right, the distant minarets of Cairo on our left, slowly recede; and the cool night-breezes follow us, laden with perfumes from Rhoda, and faint murmurs from the great city. The crew gather about the fire with "dark faces pale around that rosy flame;" and discuss, in a whisper, the appearance of the white stranger, who reclines on a pile of Persian carpets stroking his beard, puffing his chibouque, and sipping his coffee as contentedly as if he had been born and bred under the shadow of the palm.

It was a lovely night. There was just wind enough to bosom out our snowy sails that heaved as with a languid respiration; the moon shone forth in glory as if she were still the bright goddess of the land, and loved it well. No longer do the white-robed priests of Isis celebrate her mystic rites in solemn procession along these shadowy banks; no longer the Egyptian maidens move in choral dances through these darkling groves, with lotus garlands on their brow, and mirrors on their breasts, which flashed back the smile of the worshipped moon at every pant of those young bosoms, to typify that the heart within was all her own, and imaged but her deity. These were fine times for that epicurean hermit, the man in the moon. No doubt Lord Rosse's new telescope will find the expression of his countenance sadly altered in these latter days. There is no longer mystic pomp or midnight pageant in the land of Egypt; he may look in vain for venerable priest or vestal virgin now. Yet still does Isis seem to smile lovingly over her deserted shrines, and her pale light harmonizes well with the calm dwellings of the mighty Dead. These, with their pyramids, their palaces, their temples, and their tombs, are the real inhabitants of this dreamy land. The puny people who usurp their places have as little in common with them as the jackdaws with Westminster Abbey.

This sailing on the moon-lit Nile has an inexpressible charm: every sight is softened, every sound is musical, every air breathes balm. The pyramids, silvered by the moon, tower over the dark palms, and the broken ridges of the Arabian hills stand clearly out from the star-spangled sky. Distant lights, gleaming faintly among the scarce seen minarets, mark the site of Cairo, whose voices come at intervals as faintly to the ear. Sometimes the scream of a startled pelican, or the gurgle of some huge fish as he wallows in the water, may disturb the silence for a moment, but it only makes the calm that follows more profound.

All nature seems so tranced, and all the world wound in such a dream, that we can scarcely realize our own identity: vainly we try to think of Europe, and gas-lamps, and new police, and politics. Hark! to the jackal's cry among the Moslem tombs! See where the swarthy pilot sits, statue-like, with his turban and flowing beard: those plains before us have been trod by Pharaohs; these waters have borne Cleopatra; yonder citadel was the home of Saladin! We need not sleep to dream.

The night is gone—gone like a passing shadow: the sun springs suddenly into the throne of purple and rose-coloured clouds that the mist has left for him. There is scarcely a dawn—even now it was night—then day—suddenly as a cannon's flash.

Our boat lay moored to the bank. Mahmoud started to his feet, and shouted yallough! like a trumpet. Till then the deck seemed vacant; the crew were sleeping in grave-like apertures between the planks, wrapped in their white capotes. These were very shroud-like, and gave their resurrection a rather ghastly appearance. All nature seems to

waken now; flocks of turtle-doves are rustling round the villages; dogs are barking the flocks to pasture, cocks are crowing, donkeys are braying, water-wheels are creaking, and the Moslems prostrate themselves in prayer, with their foreheads to the ground, or their hands crossed upon their bosoms, their eyes motionless, and their lips quivering with the first chapter of the Koran.

For my own part a plunge into the Nile constitutes the principal part of a toilet in which razor or looking-glass are unknown. Redressed, re-turbaned, and re-seated on my carpet, Abdallah, with a graceful obeisance, presents a chibouque of fragrant latakeea, as different from our coarse English tobacco as a pastile is from burnt feathers; and Mahmoud offers a little cup of coffee's very essence. In the mean time, the crew are pitching the tent upon a little lawn beneath some palm-trees: for yonder forest shadows the ruins of Memphis, and the gardens wherein Moses used to wander with Pharaoh's daughter. Here, then, I shall wait for my good friend and fellow-voyager who lingers at Grand Cairo, while I haunt the ancient city of the Pharaohs, shooting quails, and questioning the past.

The tent is pitched, and in the East there is no such home as the tent supplies.

Make the divan—the carpets spread—
The ready cushions pile;
Rest, weary heart! rest, weary head!
From pain and pride awhile.
And all your happiest memories woo,
And mingle with your dreams,
The yellow desert glimmering through
The subtle veil of beams.

We all have much we would forget—
Be that forgotten now!
And placid hope instead shall set
Her seal upon your brow:
Imagination's prophet eye
By her shall view unfurled
The future greatnesses that lie
Hid in the Eastern world.

Then fold the tent—then on again;
One spot of ashen black,
The only sign that there has lain,
The traveller's recent track;
And gladly forward,—safe to find
At noon and eve a home,
Till we have left our tent behind
The homeless ocean-foam.*

So much for the tent. In Syria it was my only home; but on the Nile we seldom used it, as we slept on board our boat, and were generally sailing at night.

Our boat was of the class called Kandjiah. She was about fifty feet long, with a mast amidships, and another at the bow, raking forward. From these masts sprang two spars of immense length, to which were bent lateen sails in proportion. These sails are very difficult to handle, especially in the gusty parts of the river, which the mountains overhang. The Arabs are miserable sailors and excellent swimmers, so that Europeans who are not predestinarians or amphibious should keep a good look-out. Close to the bows of the boat a complicated fireplace, with oven, &c., is *built* of brick and mortar; and on these, little charcoal fireplaces, like the holes in a bagatelle-table, are for ever sparkling under coffee, or kabobs, or some Egyptian condiment. The crew sit two and two along the thauts, or sleep between them; and where these end, there is a small carpeted space, generally covered with an awning. Then comes a little cabin, open in front, not unlike the boxes of Vauxhall Gardens. In this we dined, and kept our books and guns. Within was our sleeping apartment, with a berth on each side; and beyond this was a luggage-room, and one or two smaller apartments. Such was our river-home for two months, and a very comfortable one we found it, with a few trifling exceptions.

Whilst I was at Memphis, the boat was unloaded and sunk, to clear her of rats, of which there was great slaughter. While this and other preparations were being made, I roamed over the country in search of antiquities and adventures.

I wandered towards the forest of palms that embosoms the lake of Acherusia, and the few traces that remain of the ancient city of the Pharaohs. The former, with its gloomy waters shadowed by dark foliage, and only broken by a promontory black with blasted and gnarled stems, was a spot that Rembrandt would have loved to paint; with the vivid sunshine, here and there bursting through the gloom, like bars of burning gold. Nor would he have forgotten Charon, with his spectral passengers steering his demon-ship to that vast necropolis, whose tombs are pyramids. Some mounds among these forests are generally received as Memphis. The site of Vulcan's temple, and that where the bull Apis was kept, are supposed to be ascertained. Cambyses, the tauricide, however, coming so soon after Nebuchadnezzar; and the desert—the most resistless invader of all—have left little trouble to the tourist, little harvest for the antiquarian. The only inhabitant I saw was Rhampses the Great, who lies upon his face in the mud: the benignant expression of his countenance has rather a ludicrous effect considering his attitude. He is forty feet long, and, with his wife and four sons, must have formed an imposing family-party in front of the Temple of Vulcan. The lady and young gentlemen have disappeared; let us hope

* Milnes.

they are gone to the Elysian fields, which ought to be somewhere in this neighbourhood; but, as is natural, they are much more difficult to find than the *other* place, which lies yonder.

The quick twilight was come and gone, as I wandered and wondered in this strange and lonely scene; the last rays of light fell upon the pyramid of Cheops, just visible through a vista of gigantic palm-trees, that opened from the lake of Acherusia, on the distant desert. I stole down to the water's edge, to get within gun-shot of some pelicans; but the solemn and thoughtful aspect of the scene converted my murderous intention into a fit of musing, and I almost thought I could hear the old trees whispering the dread prophecy:—"The country shall be destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein; and Noph shall be desolate." . . .

The next day I was sitting at the door of my tent, towards sunset, enjoying, under the rose-colouring influence of my chibouque, the mood of mind that my situation naturally superinduced. At my feet flowed the Nile, reflecting the lofty spars of our gaily-painted boat; beyond the river was a narrow strip of vegetation, some palm and acacia trees; then a tract of desert, bounded by the Arabian hills, all purple with the setting sunlight. Far away on the horizon the minarets and citadel of Cairo were faintly sketched against the sky; around me lay fields of corn, beneath which Memphis, with all its wonders, lay buried; and, farther on, a long succession of pyramids towered over the dark belt of forest that led along the river. Suddenly the sleeping sailors started to their feet; a shout was heard from the wood, and I saw my friend slowly emerging from its shade, accompanied by some India-bound friends of his, who were escorting him so far upon his desert way. We passed the evening together, and something more, for morning blushed at finding the party then only separating—our friends for India, we for Ethiopia—*allons!*

## CHAPTER XVII.

### EGYPTIAN MUSIC.

O surely melody from heaven was sent
To cheer the soul, when tired of human strife;
To soothe the wayward heart by sorrow bent,
And soften down the rugged path of life.
KIRKE WHITE.

FROM Memnon to Mehemet Ali all Egypt luxuriates in music. In the Pasha's palace, in the peasant's hut, at the soldier's bivouac, on the sailor's deck; in every circumstance of the Arab's life, I have found it regarded as the chief source of his enjoyment. He is born, he is married, he dies, he is buried, to the sound of music. It cheers his labour, it heightens his festival, controls his passions, and soothes his miseries.

It whiles away the monotonous hours of his weary travel; and the very camels seem to have an ear for music, quickening their pace along the desert, as weary soldiers when the band strikes up. The drivers chant alternately, or one of them sings a verse alone, to which the others reply in chorus. This has sometimes a very singular effect, as when the single voice sings a mournful measure, while the chorus answers cheerily; thus contrasting the fate of the lonely wanderer with the social home. For instance, a driver will sing in a voice so sad, that the camels sometimes weep (a most unpolitic expense of moisture, by the bye, under their circumstances):

Never more, never more,
When my journey's o'er,
Shall I see the loved ones fill the tent's cool door.

Then the chorus sings in a quick measure, to which the camel's steps, and probably his heart, keep time:

Hark! hark! the home-song;
See the glad throng
Of our wives and our little ones bounding along.

And thus, in the bleak desert, they enliven their weary hours by dramatizing the vicissitudes of fear and hope.

Our crew sang for two months almost without intermission, yet never seemed to weary of their song. Among the items furnished by our dragoman as necessary to our outfit, were a drum and some Nile-flutes. The former consisted of a large earthen bowl, with a skin stretched over it; the latter resembled the double flageolet, and was made of reeds: it seemed capable of a much wider range of notes than their monotonous music required. Its sound was somewhat shrill, but not unpleasing, and every sailor on board seemed a proficient in its use. I could detect but little variety in the airs, and the words were of the simplest kind. I listened as vainly for the songs of Antar among the Arabs of Egypt, as I had done for those of Tasso among the gondoliers of Venice.* The songs of the Arab sailor are

* I subjoin the following passage from a letter of Lord Lindsay's; its interest and originality will, I hope, plead my apology for the publication of a private letter: "When you were at Venice, did you seek for any of the old Gondolieri, who can sing Tasso? Perhaps they are all dead now; but, a long time ago (in 1829), I took two of them out one night on the Great Lagoon (very old men), each in a separate gondola, and myself in a third, some

generally of home, of the Nile, never of war, but most of all of love. Very few of these last are fit for translation; and, as the home-made poetry of a people always takes for its subject that which is uppermost in their thought, I fear the sensuality of their muse must be taken as some index of their character. It is true that the songs of our sailors and our cottagers are not always of the most edifying character; but the popularity of some of the "old songs that are the music of the heart;" the love ballads of Scotland, England, and, above all, of old Ireland; the enthusiasm for the compositions of Moore, Burns, and Dibdin, which linked in one sympathy the castle and the cottage, and the sailor's home, all proves that there is an echo to a purer tone even in the rugged and too little cared for minds of our peasantry.

I do not pretend to give specimens of Arab poetry; but I subjoin one or two translations of Nile songs in verse, as unartistic as their own. The first was given to me by a Levantine lady, and probably owes much of its delicacy to the fair medium through which it passed from the Arabic into Italian. The original is characteristic in its profusion of imagery, and unique, as far as I know of Eastern poetry, in its purity and tenderness of tone. Lady! should these desultory pages ever meet thy radiant eyes, let me be grateful that the veil of a strange language will half conceal their imperfections; thy gentle heart will do the rest, and whisper thee besides how much the wanderer owes to thee, if ever a bright thought illumes his "Wanderbuch."

### THE ARAB LOVER TO HIS MISTRESS.

Thou art the palm-tree of my desert; and thy smile, so soft and bright
Is the moonlight of my spirit in its long and dreary night;
Only flower in my heart's deserted garden—only well
In my life's wide, lonely wilderness, my starry-eyed gazelle!

But the palm-tree waves in sunny heights, unreached by sighs of mine;
And the moonlight has its mission first, on loftier brows to shine;
And a stronger hand will pluck that flower, unseal that stainless spring—
Well! may'st thou be happy, even with *him*, while lone I'm wandering!

---

distance apart. They sang Tasso to me for above an hour, one of them in Venetian, the other in Tuscan. The effect was inexpressibly beautiful; what with the association, the moonlight, and the distant bells from the city, which kept up a running accompaniment throughout. The air is singularly wild and beautiful, descending, like a cascade, at the end of each stanza."

Very different is the song which now swells from our sailors' circle. One plays the pipes, another strikes the drum *à la tambourine*, and all the rest accompany the wild, quick music by clapping their hands. Each verse is first sung by a single voice, and then the two last lines are repeated in full chorus. The words are trifling, and seem to convey little meaning; it is the air (which to us seems to resemble "Young Lobsky said to his ugly wife") that is to them so full of association, lights up their swarthy countenances, and swells their voices with enthusiasm.

### THE MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER.

MOTHER.

My daughter, 'tis time that thou wert wed;
Ten summers already have shone o'er thy head;
I must find thee a husband if, under the sun,
The conscript-catcher has left us one.

DAUGHTER.

Dear mother, one husband will never do;
I have so much love, that I must have two;
And I'll find for each, as you shall see,
More love than both can bring to me.

One husband shall carry a lance so bright;
He shall roam the desert for spoil by night;
And when morning lights up the dark palm-tree,
He shall find sweet welcome-home from me.

The other a sailor bold shall be;
He shall fish all day in the deep blue sea; *
And when evening brings his hour of rest,
He shall find repose on this faithful breast.

MOTHER.

There's no chance, my child, of a double match,
For men are scarce, and hard to catch;
So I fear you *must* make one husband do,
And try to love him as well as two.

These songs were, for the most part, humorous; and such they always chanted on approaching a village, or when gathered round their night-fires, as the boat lay moored to the bank. But they had also songs of a graver character, and more plaintive airs, which they sang on leaving their friends, or engaging in serious undertakings. Thus, when we had reached the limits of our journey at the Second Cataract, and our boat's head was turned towards the North and home, they sang the following stanzas, beginning with a prayer, while their oars kept time to the plaintive measure.

### THE ARAB SAILOR'S SONG.

Allah! il Allah! hear our prayer!
Just Prophet grant that the winds be fair,
And the guiding moon her lustre lends,
To favour the guest whom Allah sends.†

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* The Arabs call the Nile "El Bahr," *the sea.*

† Mahomet hospitably taught that a stranger was a "God-given guest," which the Arabs naturally consider the best of introductions.

The stranger's home is far away,
'Neath the bright death-bed of the day;
O'er many horizons * his bark must go
Ere he reach that home. Row, Arabs, row.

Though gentle Nile, for stormy sea,
Though for forest dark, the bright palm-tree
He must change, yet his father's home is there,
And his love's soft eye is gloomed with care.

The pale-faced stranger, lonely here,
In cities afar, where his name is dear,
Your Arab truth and strength shall show
He trusts in us. Row, Arabs, row.

And they *did* row, sometimes eighteen hours at a stretch, only pausing to eat their scanty meals, and to drink of their beloved river. There was one Nubian in our crew, a harmless, inoffensive creature, who filled the indispensable situation of butt to his comrades; submitting to all their jokes, and laughing at them, too, even when practised on himself. The day on which we entered Nubia, however, he came out in a new character, knocked overboard an Egyptian who had affronted him, and, to the surprise of all, actually volunteered a song. It was received with great approbation, and repeated so often with shouts of laughter, that I obtained a translation of it. This I subjoin, premising that the *refrain* "Durwadeega" is Nubian for "Henhouse," and that this henhouse is always the property of the wife, which her husband is obliged to make over to her in case of a divorce.

### NUBIAN SONG.

A change came over my husband's mind;
He loved me once, and was true and kind;
Till his heart went astray, and he wished me away,
But he had no money my dower to pay.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

For, blessed be Allah! he's old and poor,
And my cocks and hens were his only store,
So he kept me still, for well he knew
If I went, that the cocks and hens went too.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

But I saw him pining day by day,
As he wished his poor wife far away;
So I went my rival home to call,
And gave her the henhouse and him and all.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadee!

Then he tore his turban off his brow,
And swore I never should leave him now,
Till the death-men combed his burial locks.†
Then blessed for ever be hens and cocks.
Sing Durwadeega, Durwadee,
Oh dear to me is Durwadeega!

"Songs of the Nile," and "River Melodies," and Arab poetry, by octavos, have found their way to English harp, and piano, and perusal. Many of these are very pretty, and some beautiful, but few bear any mark of coming farther from the East than Temple-bar. They are, in fact, *too good* to be true, which is an objection the severest critic cannot bring forward against these genuine importations of mine. Any Nile-traveller will find his dragoman acquainted with the last three songs that I have quoted, and he can put them into better poetry for himself if he has leisure.

I shall only quote one more song (which is Cairene, not Nilotic, by the bye), as illustrative of the singular manner in which these people blend love and religion, and express in the same stanza their devotion to their Maker and their mistress.

### SERENADE.

Come forth, bright girl, and midnight skies
Will think that morning's gate uncloses;
The dazzled dew will think thine eyes
Are suns, and vanish from the roses.
Allah! how my heart-strings stir!
Harp-like, touched by thought of her!
Holy prophet! blessed be thou!
Fairest maiden, hear my vow!

The rich red wine seems mantling high
Within thy cheeks, so roseate glowing,
And beauty-drunkenness through mine eye
Is all my fevered heart o'erflowing.
Blessed Allah! send thy grace!
Blessed Allah! make my face
White, before thy presence dread
Wakes to life the slumbering dead.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### VALLEY OF THE NILE.

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave, mighty thought, threading a dream;
And times, and things, as in that vision seem,
Keeping along it, their eternal stands,
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands,
That roamed through the young earth—the flag extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing Queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng;
And the void weighs on us: and then to wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along,
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on, for human sake.

LEIGH HUNT.

SOON after daylight on the 8th of February,

* In the East, they count distances by horizons.

† The head of the Moslem is kept closely shaved, with the exception of one long lock of hair, which is left for the convenience of the resurrection angel, to pull him out of his grave. This is carefully arranged by those who prepare the corpse for burial.

we gave the word to start; the capacious tent shrank into a little bag; its furniture resumed its place in the cabins of the boat: and our voyage began indeed.

Eight Arabs towed us along, for there was not a breath of wind: they went capering, singing, and laughing, as if labour was their sport. A red skullcap, a loose blue shirt, and red slippers, was their only dress. Sometimes the breeze would freshen suddenly, and the boat shot ahead; then they wrapped their only garment as a turban on their brows, swam on board, let fall the sails, and with tambourine and pipe struck up their everlasting song. Generally, however, in the daytime, they were towing from morning until sunset; the pilot squatted motionless on the poop; the rais reclining at the bow, now and then exchanging a joke with the two servants, who alone busied about, in the constant preparation of pipes, coffee, dinner, and other refreshment.

Keenly we enjoyed this, our first essay at Nile navigation. Reclined on cushions, under a thick awning that made twilight of the blazing sunshine; surrounded by the strange African scenery, every change of which had so much interest for us; then books and maps lay beside us, ever ready to explain or illustrate what we saw; our guns, lying close at hand, were in constant exercise.

Along our left ran the chain of the Mokattam, or Arabian hills; now receding, now approaching to the river, with an interval of level ground, varying from three to nine miles. This is, for the most part, desert, and utterly barren are those hills; but a rich green strip of vegetation runs along the banks, parked off from the sandy tract by groups, or forests of palm-trees. On the right is a wider tract of cultivation, millet, bearded wheat, lupines, &c.; and this plain is bounded by the Lybian desert and its hills.

The banks are enlivened by frequent villages, always sheltered by palm groves; and now and then, in some lonely spot, appears the ruins of some city of the olden time, or column skeletons of a temple; and, far as the eye can reach, pyramids peer at intervals over the sand-hill, or the forest.

The concentration of vitality along the Nile is very striking. In the desert there is no sign of life; along the river it seems to swarm under every aspect. The waters themselves are thronged by huge, strange-looking fishes; myriads of flies and gnats buzz in chorus to the ripple of the waters. On the bank innumerable lizards are glancing, snakes are twining, and countless insects of unimaginable forms are crawling. The rank vegetation teems with inhabitants, from the grub to the grasshopper. The low spits of sand, that run occasionally into the river, are all of a quiver with wild fowl. Could one throw a net over

> "Those quick, restless wings that gleam
> Variously in the sun's bright beam,"

one would enclose a rare aviary. Snow-white pelicans, purple Nile geese, herons, ibis, lapwings, and a crowd of nameless birds, seem masquerading there. The very air is darkened, and rustling with flocks of beautiful turtle-doves, birds of paradise, hoopoes, and strange swallows; and, high over all, soars the eagle and the hawk on the watch for the living, and the vulture scenting for the dead. Flocks of sheep and goats are browsing about each village; troops of wild dogs prowling, camels stalking along the footpath, and buffaloes making their eternal rounds in the waterwheels that irrigate the land.

Amidst all this exuberance of life, man only languishes; yet the fecundity of the Egyptian is proverbial. Vainly do the fish prey on the insects, and the eagle and the hawk on the feathered tribes; they multiply notwithstanding; but man has *his* tyrant, whose influence is deadlier far; and 500,000 souls have withered from Egypt, within the last ten years, under the blight of conscription and oppression. It is not only the loss of men that is caused by enrolment, battle, and disease; but, when the Pasha's press-gangs are out recruiting, whole villages become deserted. The men fly to the deserts, to escape his odious service, and their wives and children dare not remain behind them, to meet the vengeance of the baffled pursuer. In the desert they perish by thousands; and when pursuit has passed by, and the man-catchers have returned to their camp, many a roof remains deserted, for those who made a home there lie with bleached bones upon the desert.

The dread of conscription is painfully illustrated in the number of the maimed you meet everywhere. At least two-thirds of the male population of Egypt have deprived themselves of the right eye, or of the forefinger of the right hand. There are even professional persons, who go about to poison the eye, which they do with verdigris, or sew it up altogether. Our equipment consisted of twelve men; of these only ten were liable to conscription, and seven of them were either one-eyed or forefingerless.

As we are upon a melancholy subject, I will here relate a circumstance we witnessed at a village near Minyeh. A man had been drowned; his body had been recovered from the river, and lay upon a mat under the shelter of some palms; a crowd of women, with dishevelled hair, were seated round the

corpse, beating their naked bosoms, and screaming out their lamentations over one who had suddenly become endowed with every virtue in the Koran. That undulating circle, with their flashing eyes, and dark faces, and loose blue drapery, was a striking group. One woman, with a loud, wailing voice, would recapitulate some of the perfections of the dead; and, when she paused, the rest all cried in chorus, "Wiley! Wiley! Wo! Wo!" The scene brought vividly before my eyes the Keeners of Ireland, and since then a passage in *The Edinburgh Review* has been pointed out to me where the same coincidence is remarked. Mr. Jones thought he could even recognize the "Ululu;" and affirms that the African asks the same pathetic but unanswerable question that the bereaved Irish put to their dead: "Why did you die, darling? Why did you die."

There is something very time-stealing in the pleasant monotony of Nile travel: evening comes on so softly, morning rises with such unvarying brightness; the occupations of each day are so similar, that days become weeks, and weeks months, almost imperceptibly. We rise early, for the sake of the cool: on emerging from our cabin, a cup of coffee and a pipe meet us on the threshold; we take our guns, and walk along the edge of the cultivated land, in pursuit of quail, or red-legged partridge, or unknown birds, by whose death ornithology profits as little as our cuisine.

Mahmoud, at the same time (while the sailors are towing), pays a morning visit to the villages in search of poultry, eggs, butter, and milk. Sometimes we accompany him to explore; and sometimes visit a temple, or a jungle with Abdallah.

About nine we take a breakfast that Ude might envy, for Mahmoud is a first-rate artiste; and then the unfailing pipe promotes thought, and conversation, and repose of mind and body; for the noonday sun is blazing fiercely, and the very Arabs move languidly along.

It is passing pleasant, with a pleasant companion, and such was my rare lot, to find oneself, for the first and only time in life, in the enjoyment of perfect, unbroken, unreproachful leisure. The calm life we lead, the calm climate that we breathe, the absence of all disturbance, of anxiety, or care, or hope, or fear, all this presents such a contrast to the life we have left, and must soon return to, that we can scarcely believe in our own identity.

This sense of enjoyment only lasts for a season, however, and we were long enough upon the Nile to wear it out; the instinct of action, the force of habit, and Norman restlessness, soon returned. Long before our voyage was concluded, we pined for Europe and for the working world, with all its wear and tear, and struggles and distractions.

At first, however, as I have observed, this life of indolence was very enjoyable. We read during the heat of the day; about sunset took a swim in the river; and then dined on such variety as Mahmoud's ingenuity could devise out of chickens, eggs, vegetables, and mutton. Beef is never seen in Egypt, since the late murrain, which carried off 240,000 head of cattle, or 320,000, as Mehemet Ali told a friend of mine. The mortality still continues, and every day we see carcasses of oxen floating down the river, and apparently navigated by a crew of vultures, who seem to take to this sort of yachting with as great gusto as if they had been reared at Cowes.

At sunset, if there is no wind, we moor for the night alongside the bank, and then there is always time for a pleasant stroll by starlight, with good promise of adventure. Then coffee, pipes, books, and bed.

Thus we lived a pleasant week, and arrived at the prettiest city on the Nile, called Minyeh, the abode of the good Ebn Khasid, whose history forms an interesting episode in Lord Lindsay's "Letters."

Soon after leaving Minyeh, we arrived at a dangerous pass in the river, where the Arabian hills approach the banks, or rather frown over the river, in steep and menacing cliffs, at whose base the waters welter fearfully, and a storm is always howling.

It was late when we approached them; our boat was reeling along under the pressure of enormous sails which we could not furl, as this process requires men to go aloft, and she staggered so much that they were afraid to venture. A lurid-looking moon peeped occasionally from behind some ragged clouds, as if to see how we were getting on; and the wind grew wilder as we entered that gloomy ravine.

Picture to yourself, oh sofa-seated reader, a wild African glen, through which a mighty river is roaring, but its voice is drowned in the shriek of the blast, as, torn by the craggy cliffs, it flings itself on the foam-covered boat as on a victim. Now, a gust that has lost its way comes rushing by, and takes the sails aback, burying the struggling bark up to her main mast in the gurgling waters; now, another gust comes fiercely up the river, and drives us madly and unmanageably against the caverned cliffs. The Arabs stand stupefied, or reel with the staggering boat, and look fearfully up to the unfurlable sails that seem determined to drag us to destruction. They swore, and shrieked, and prepared to swim for it; we sat, and smoked, and wondered how it was to end.

At length, a very respectable storm, concentrated into one gust, came rushing by, took our sails as if they were set to it, buried our bows under water, and sent us spinning along on a wave of our own making, till it drove us clear out of the chasm; and then, as if it had done its work, went back to its home among those awful cliffs, where, I dare say, it is panting still.

The Arabs say that a storm *lives* under this height of Abou Fadee, and it seems to keep a moon and clouds to match, for no sooner had we emerged into the open river, than this same moon smiled blandly over us, and not a cloud was visible in the deep blue sky.

The next morning, we reached the village and factory of Rhoda, where is a sugar plantation of the Pasha's. Its superintendent is an intelligent and hospitable Irishman, a Mr. M'Pherson, who left the West Indies on the emancipation of the slaves, and who has been here ever since. A lonely life he must have of it, as there is not a person of his own quarter of the world there, except the engineer, who is an Englishman.

The West Indian sugar-cane thrives here: its juice is expressed by two English steam-engines, and is refined afterwards by eggs alone; Islamism not allowing the use of blood. The consequence is that the sugar is of a very coarse quality, and it is only by an exercise of despotism that it attains the price of fourpence a pound at the factory. This is one of the Pasha's monopolies; it occupies 300 labourers, who are all conscripts; they nominally receive a piastre a day (about twopence-halfpenny) for their labour; but this is always a year in arrear, and, when paid, is paid half in kind.

Every boat ascending the Nile hoists the flag of the country to which its proprietor belongs. Besides this, each traveller, before leaving Cairo, adopts a private flag, and registers it at the hotels with his own name and that of his boat. Thus, every stranger, on arriving at Cairo, learns who is "up" the river, and for what flag to look.

I had been expecting for some days to meet an old friend, and, hearing that there was an English flag at Siout, we pushed on, day and night, stimulating our crew by bribes, till we arrived at the little village of El Hamra. This is the port of Siout, which is the capital of Upper Egypt, and was the residence of Ibrahim Pasha when governor of the province.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### SIOUT—THE CATACOMBS.

And there the bodies lay, age after age,
Mute, life-like, rounded, fresh, and undecaying
Like those asleep in quiet hermitage,
With gentle sleep about their eyelids playing;
And living in their rest, beyond the rage
Of death or life: while Fate was still arraying,
In liveries ever new, the rapid, blind,
And fleeting generations of mankind.

SHELLEY.

We found ourselves disappointed in the owner of the English flag at Siout; but as our crew had stipulated to remain one day here to bake bread for the remainder of the voyage, we mounted donkeys, and, accompanied by Mahmoud and one of the crew carrying provisions, started for Siout. El Hamra, the little village at which our boat lay moored, besides being the port of the capital of the Said, or Upper Egypt, is remarkable for its ship-building propensities. There were six or seven vessels of various sizes on the stocks then: their knee-timbers formed of acacia wood, their scarfings of the sycamore-plane tree.

Siout is watered by a canal, and approached from the river by a road that runs along a causeway, under an avenue of plane-trees, about a mile in length. The city itself possesses baths, bazaars, rope-walks, and a cotton factory, a slave-market, and the best pipe manufactory in the East; but, notwithstanding all these advantages, it is dirty, unpaved, and poverty-stricken. This is one of the great desert caravan stations, and therefore contains some spacious khans and other accommodations. I visited the slave-market, where the proprietor at first refused me admittance, but I understood enough of Arabic manners by this time to pass him by unnoticed; whereupon he attended me very civilly over his establishment. A brace of pistols in one's girdle, and a kurbash, or hippopotamus whip in one's hand, does more in the East towards the promotion of courtesy, good humour, and good fellowship, than all the smiles and eloquence that ever were exerted.

The slaves here looked miserable enough, just arrived from Darfur, across the desert. The Jelab, or slave-merchant, had lost great numbers of them from hunger and fatigue, and said that those remaining would not repay him for his outlay.

Passing out of the city towards the mountains, we met numbers of women-slaves, washing and filling water-jars in the canal. They wore as little covering as Eve, but the eye soon becomes accustomed to this; dark people never look naked, at least to white ones.

After an hour's ride, we arrived at the foot f the steep, but terraced, calcareous hills, hich formed a sort of vertical cemetery for ie inhabitants of Lycopolis, the predecessor f Siout. Herein the piety of old dug tombs f the magnitude and fashion of temples: For," said they, "those whom we bury now s mere men, when they are awakened, will e as Gods, and must not be ashamed of the laces wherein they have lain so long." Volves would also appear to have feelings on he subject, for numerous mummies of these rutes have been found as carefully pre-erved as those of their worshippers.

Our donkeys clambered actively up the ides of the crumbling mountain, and at ength we stood on a platform in front of he wonderful Stabl d'Antar, commanding a iew of about a hundred miles of the valley f the Nile. A vast level panorama, bounded y the chains of the Arabian and Libyan hills, ay spread before us, diversified with every hade of green, and watered by the Nile, that rept like a silvery serpent through the green avannahs. This vast plain was intersected y numerous dykes, or canals, which regu-ate the inundation of the Nile; and, as these re generally planted with trees, they help o give character to the somewhat mono-onous landscape. Here and there a few ents were pitched in a green meadow, round hich horses grazed, but generally it was nder agriculture of exuberant fertility; heat, and flax, and Indian corn, with here nd there a sugar-cane plantation, or a grove f acacias or palm-trees.

The sun was high and burning hot, with-ut one cloud in all the sky, when we took refuge in the Stabl d'Antar. The portal of his splendid charnel-house is about thirty feet high, hewn out of the calcareous rock. The roof, here and there, displayed traces of beautiful designs, in blue and yellow that once was gold. Within this were lofty halls, and many chambers, with hieroglyphics, and some fine human figures on the walls. I do not attempt to describe these or any other antiquities at length, as those who visit them will consult higher authority: and those who only read of them would be fatigued by their dry detail. There are many tomb-temples of large size cut into this mountain, but the smaller burying-places are so numerous that they present the appearance of a huge rabbit-warren.

I stood a long time among these solitary tombs, surrounded by fragments of the mummied dead for whom these costly decorations had been made. Here was the delicate form of woman, rounded and elastic-looking, as in life; there, the sinewy limb of manhood, and the plump arm of infancy. Man and child, they were three thousand years old; and scattered in such variety and profusion, that one might fancy the hill-side to be the workshop of some Frankenstein "in extensive business." It struck me that our Arabs, who are forbidden to touch the dead as unclean, handled these human fragments without hesitation, so much more than dead did they appear; and one may believe that Mahmoud's eternal coffee-pot was boiled by the inflammable bosom of some aromatic princess.

I looked down from the habitations of the ancient dead, on the rich, luxuriant plains and swarming city of the living; there was no Cicerone on that lonely mountain to disturb one's reflections. These rocks tell their own tale, or there is none to tell. Perishable flowers were blooming round me as fresh and perfect as when, three thousand years ago, they were gathered by these mummy hands as a wreath wherewith to adorn that mummy brow. Gossiping Arabs were irreverently kicking the shins of the powerful dead, and probably there was no relationship between them to aggravate the indignity, though they occupied the same soil.

Who *were* these mighty dead, who have left such monuments behind them, to awe the thoughtful and puzzle the frivolous? Here is a tomb as large as the throne-room at St. James's, and once as elaborately adorned with carving, and gilding, and delicate art; part of it is incomplete, however; the mark of the chisel, and each line of work is still, as it were, freshly left. What then caused the sudden arrest of life and labour here? None can ever tell. One hour, a realm alive with strength, and energy, and mighty projects, such as the world has never conceived before or since: the next, and all seems changed. That mighty race is gone for ever, and another, heavy with the curse of their great patriarch, arises: crushed and degraded, tyrant after tyrant has trodden them down for two thousand years till now.

These tombs are going rapidly to decay; the pillars and pilasters that supported them are daily rolled down the hill, to make dwellings for the living race of men.

According to Coptic tradition, Siout was the residence of the holy family, when they took refuge in Egypt from Herod's persecution; such associations invest their localities with an interest that it is unnecessary to analyze. If *we* can believe in their truth, to *us* the tradition is realized; and he who would walk through the world, dismissing as untrue all that is incapable of mathematical proof, will lose considerably more than he can gain by his fastidiousness.

Such iconoclasts of old faiths, and legends,

and traditions, have not only destroyed a great deal of the poetry of daily life; but many a truth that only required time for its vindication and development, has fallen before the unsparing sceptic, merely because it was in suspicious company.

Let *us*, then, as we descend from this charnel mountain, welcome the tradition that reminds us of Him who gave hope to *our* graves, and walk reverently on the spot which, if it never witnessed the human presence of the Son, is ever in the presence of the Father.

The appearance of Siout, particularly from the mountains, is very striking and picturesque. Groups of white minarets, and two or three mosque domes, rise from groves of palm-trees and acacia; and many a varied mass of buildings, rather less mud-coloured, and more fantastically shaped than those of most of the Egyptian towns we have hitherto seen. Indeed, these, with the exception of beautiful Mineyeh and Manfalout, are deeply indebted to the thick palm-groves that veil them. Siout is bordered by gardens and kiosks, beyond which stretch the rich plains I have before alluded to.

This city was formerly the refuge of the Mamelukes, and contains a handsome palace, built by Ibrahim Pasha, from the ruins of a despoiled temple. It contains twenty thousand souls, about one thousand of whom are Coptic Christians.

## CHAPTER XX.

### RIVER INCIDENTS.

Oh, thou beneficent and bounteous stream!
Thou Patriarch River! on whose ample breast
We dwelt the time, that full at once could seem
Of busiest travel and of softest rest.

R. M. Milnes.

What a versatile power our mind possesses of adapting nature to its mood! It is not what a country is, but what we are, that renders it rich in interest or pregnant with enjoyment. Even in this monotonous life we lead upon the Nile, though the scenery, and even the events among which we live, are generally the repetition of the former days' experience, yet the fluctuating mind makes its own variety, and, to say truth, we are not a little indebted to the illusion. Even Egypt cannot supply an inexhaustible excitement of interesting objects; and, although these are unique in their way, the traveller requires to have recourse to study or sheer exercise, if he would preserve his elasticity of mind. The same river is ever murmuring round us; each clay-built village, buried in its graceful grove of palms, appears but a recurrence of the last; the same range of the Arabian mountains, unvarying in form, runs along our left; here and there, the Lybian chain of hills advances and retires from the banks, but it seems always the same hill or glen that lies before us; there is ever the same cloudless sky and delicious temperature (how precious would be a storm!); the same gorgeous sunsets and nightly blue, starry with constellations by which Abraham steered his course from the land of Chaldæa: day by day, and week by week, we are tranquilly floating by colossal temples, mountain pyramids, excavated hills, man-made rivers, and monk-made hermitages, in which a hyæna might feel lonely. But lest my reader should weary of such scenery, I will sum up the impressions I intended to convey in the words of the most agreeable, and perhaps instructive of Egyptian travellers.

"I have realized Horace's idea of complete repose in lying at length under a green arbutus, beside his own bright fountain at Lucretilis; but what is that to reclining under a tent, on a Turkish divan, in an Arab boat ascending the Nile, a never-ending diorama of loveliness!—villages, dove-cots, mosques, santons' tombs, hermits' cells, temples, pyramids, avenues of the thorny acacia, and, loveliest of all, groves after groves of date trees—

"'bending
Languidly their leaf-crowned heads,
Like youthful maids, when sleep descending,
Warns them to their silken beds,'

all slumbrous, all gliding past like the scenery of a dream, without effort, peacefully, silently; and yet, as when watching the stars at midnight, you feel all the while as if the sweetest music was murmuring in your ear." *

Such are the scenes among which we live, all dissimilar from those of Europe; and the incidents of our life are no less unlike. Sometimes, it is true, for days together, the north wind fills our sails, and then of course we never leave the boat, and are driven to our own resources, the chief of which is reading. The mental activity, and the physical repose, that such an existence superinduces, would make a schoolboy in the vacation studious—

"Let those read now who never read before,
And those who always read now read the more."

Herodotus, who announces, and Belzoni, who discovers, the Egyptian mysteries, are our favourite authors. The former with his vivid perceptions and simple yet most graphic descriptions might have written yesterday, for the Past of Egypt is its Present.

* Lord Lindsay.

One reads also with the advantage of copious illustrations; now the traveller is bending over the pages that teem with marvels, now he looks up, beholding them realized, and the incredible rendered credible. Even now we have lost sight of the Pyramids, whose existence the ear never would have credited if the eye had not seen them. Now we are passing Ekmim, where a tradition still lingers that Pharaoh thence summoned the magicians who were to contend with Moses.

Among all the epidemic eccentricities that ever seized upon the mind of man, the hermit life that St. Antony preached, and that myriads adopted, is perhaps the strangest. Behold a mountain all perforated with caverns, where the Eremites dispossessed the fox and the eagle to find a dwelling where they might pass their isolated lives:—

"In hope to merit heaven by making earth a hell."

There, in solitude and silence, dwelt multitudes sufficient to have peopled ambition-haunted, luxury-loving, pleasure-thrilled cities. Among those human eyries, Athanasius, the ecclesiastical dictator, found a refuge from the persecutions of Julian and the Arians. Now we glide under a cliff too steep for even the bold hermit to find footing; but a convent crowns it, and Cœnobites now conspire in the cause which the hermit worked out in solitude. Hark! a cry rises from the water, "Carità! per l'amor di Dio! Christiani! elieeson!" and half a dozen aquatic monks are begging alms round the boat as they swim. The Moslem crew show little disposition to befriend these beggars: our dragoman hands over some piastres, which we suspect are paras, with a very indifferent grace; and the floating friars return to their cliffs, on which, some weeks later, I fired at two crocodiles. The first time a man fires at a crocodile is an epoch in his life. We had only now arrived in the waters where they abound, for it is a curious fact that none are ever seen below Mineyeh; though Herodotus speaks of them as fighting with the dolphins at the mouths of the Nile. A prize had been offered for the first man who detected a crocodile, and the crew had been for two days on the alert in search of them. Buoyed up with the expectation of such game, we had latterly reserved our fire for them exclusively; and the wild duck and turtle; nay, even the vulture and the eagle had swept past, or soared above us in security.

At length, the cry of "Timseach, timseach!" was heard from half a dozen claimants of the proffered prize, and half a dozen black fingers were eagerly pointed to a spit of sand, on which were strewn apparently some logs of trees. It was a Covey of Crocodiles! Hastily and silently the boat was run in shore. R. was ill, so I had the enterprise to myself, and clambered up the steep bank with a quicker pulse than when I first levelled a rifle at a Highland deer. My intended victims might have prided themselves on their superior nonchalance; and, indeed, as I approached them, there seemed to be a sneer on their ghastly mouths and winking eyes. Slowly they rose, one after the other, and waddled to the water, all but one, the most gallant or most gorged of the party. He lay still until I was within a hundred yards of him; then, slowly rising on his fin-like legs, he lumbered towards the river, looking askance at me with an expression of countenance that seemed to say, "He can do me no harm; but we may as well have a swim." I took aim at the throat of the supercilious brute, and, as soon as my hand steadied, the very pulsation of my finger pulled the trigger. Bang! went the gun; whizz! flew the bullet; and my excited ear could catch the *thud* with which it plunged into the scaly leather of his neck: his waddle became a plunge, the waves closed over him, and the sun shone upon calm water as I reached the brink of the shore that was still indented by the waving of his gigantic tail. But there is blood upon the water, and he rises for a moment to the surface: "a hundred piastres for the timseach," I exclaimed, and half a dozen Arabs plunged into the stream. There! he rises again, and the Blacks dash at him as if he hadn't a tooth in his head. Now he is gone, the waters close over him, and I never saw him since.

From that time, we saw hundreds of crocodiles of all sizes, and fired shots enough at them for a Spanish revolution; but we never could get possession of any, even if we hit them, which to this day remains uncertain. I believe each traveller, who is honest enough, will make the same confession.

Crocodiles stuffed were often brought to us to buy; but the Arabs take a great deal of trouble to get them, making an ambush in the sands where they resort, and taking aim when within a few yards of their foe; for as such they regard these monsters, though they seldom suffer from them. Above the cataracts, a Greek officer in the Pasha's service told me they are very fierce, and the troops at Sennaar lost numbers of men by them and the hippopotamus, when bathing; but I heard of only one death occurring below the cataracts this year. This was of an old woman, who was drawing water near Keneh. A crocodile encircled her with his tail, brushed her into the water, and then, seizing her by the waist, held her under the water in his mouth as long as she continued to

move. When lifeless, he swam with the corpse, across the river, to the opposite bank; and the villagers, now assembled, saw him quietly feeding on their old friend, as an otter might upon a salmon. The Egyptian, who narrated this circumstance, told us with a grin that the woman was his grandmother; that he had shot the crocodile three days afterwards, and sold the assassin of the old lady to an Englishman for seven and sixpence!

The king of the crocodiles is said to reside at Denderah, and the queen some forty miles higher up the river. This separation of the royal family does not appear to have any injurious effect on the interests of the rest of the grim community. There was scarcely a sunny bank between these regal residences, whereon a crowd of crocodiles was not to be seen, laying eggs, or plots against passengers. We endeavoured to procure some of these eggs, R. for his museum, I for an omelette; but they were not to be had just then. The parent crocodile deposits them, to the number of from 80 to 100, in the sand, which is a sort of foundling hospital for her race: even hens won't hatch in Egypt, so it could scarcely be expected that crocodiles would set the example. Besides, whatever might be the warmth of the maternal feelings *within* that damp, cold, slimy bosom, the exterior seems little calculated for the purposes of incubation. The sun, then, is the foster-mother, and the only watchers by the eggshell cradle are the fishes and the birds of prey. Imagine a nest of crocodile eggs, when the embryos feel that it is time to make a start of it, and roll about the shells, attempting to emancipate themselves. Out they come, and make a rush for the river; a flock of hawks and kites is on the wing for them, the ichneumons run at them, fishes gape for them; yet enough escape to make one rather squeamish about bathing in the neighbourhood, till all-powerful habit reconciles one to their society.

In the month of March the north wind is rare, and the principal progress made up the river is by towing. As the Arabs cannot walk with such a drawback more than two miles an hour, the traveller has abundant opportunities for pedestrian excursions. The corn-fields afford a fair quantity of red-legged partridge and abundance of quails towards the end of March. About the gloaming of the evening you occasionally, but rarely, get a shot at a jackal or even a hyæna; and in Nubia your hopes are excited by tales of gazelles, and sometimes of lions.

At one time we took to fishing, and though we had only twine and crooked pins for tackle, we met with the most signal success. It is true, the fish were strange and hideous to the eye, and detestable to the palate; still it was gratifying to our vanity to circumvent the fish that were once deified by the men who built Thebes.

Our botanical researches were very limited, not only by our want of science, but of subjects. There may have been a great variety of weeds; but, as children only open a book for pictures, we only sought for flowers, and these were very few and far between. The cotton-flower, for the sake of its novelty; the meadow-saffron, the convolvulus, the buttercup, and the orchis, for the sake of home, were often pressed into our service, and adorned our breakfast-table.

We are now in Upper Egypt, the country of the Doum-palm, which resembles a gigantic gooseberry-bush, stuck over with dark green fans in full flirt, instead of leaves. It is very quaint, but not to be compared in beauty to the common palm, or date-tree.

"The princess of the sylvan race,
When islanded amid the level green,
Or charming the wild desert with her grace,
The only verdure of the sultry scene,
Ever, with simple majesty of mien,
No other growth of nature can assume,
She reigns! and most when in the evening sheen,
The stable column and the waving plume
Shade the delicious lights that all around illume." *

This noble tree is indigenous in Egypt, and seems at home in the desert. Its tall straight trunk and luxuriant head must have given the idea to the early architect of the column and the capital, long before the acanthus, clustering round the block of marble, taught the Greek. Its produce, when cultivated, is very great, and forms the staple article of food to the poor Egyptians. Every palm in the country is registered, and pays a tax of from twopence to fourpence each. The fruit is not the only useful part, however: of its fibres ropes are manufactured; of its leaves, baskets; of its lighter wood, hencoops, and light bedsteads; of its timber, with the addition of some mud, houses and boats; and even the kernels of its fruit are bruised for the food of camels.

The forests that it forms are very picturesque, though solemn, from the deep shadow that its foliage casts over the arcades of columnar trunks. It harmonizes beautifully with the ruins of the tombs and temples; but, most of all, it appears to advantage when standing alone in the desert, waving aloft its verdant plume, "the banner of the climate."

The Acacia in Lower Egypt is very ornamental and abundant; but it is only in the Saïd and Nubia that it produces the gum-arabic, which trickles from incisions in the

* Milnes.

bark: this last is the Acacia Nilotica; the former is the Acacia Lebbekh.

The Olive and the Sycamore are the only other trees that deserve the name in Egypt. Shrubs abound in infinite variety, and the Citron, the Orange, and the Lotus are also indigenous. This last tree is the Rhamnus spina Christi of Linnæus, and *probably* bears the fruit that proved such an antidote to Nostalgia in the days of Ulysses. This fruit is about the size of a grape, and very pleasant to the taste; the thorns look like beautiful ivory, tinged with pale rose colour.

At each village where we halt for supplies, a little market is *improvised* round about us, The old men squat in a circle in the front places, smoking their pipes, and discussing us as coolly and gravely as if we were mere abstractions. The men offer spears, or crocodiles, or antiquities for sale; the women, butter, eggs, milk, and poultry—the latter cost about twopence each; eggs about threepence a hundred; butter, sevenpence a pound; a sheep costs about four and sixpence.

On arriving at Keneh, we gave a feast to the crew, consisting of an old ram, which they preferred to younger mutton, because it "stood more chewing." The creature was alive, killed, boiled, and devoured, within an hour: his very eyes, feet, intestines, and, I do believe, his horns were swallowed; nothing remained but his skin. This, in the first moment of digestive leisure, was stretched, while warm, over the drum, dried almost immediately by the hot sun; and in the dance and song which followed, it actually contributed to the festivities consequent on its proprietor's devourment, and, like Zitzka's skin, was beaten with thrilling associations of its owner.

Before leaving Cairo for the Nile voyage, each traveller registered his name, with that of his boat, and the colour of his private flag; so that every person arriving in Egypt could find out what friends were "up" the river, and knew what flag to look for. I found the names of two of my old friends among those who were wandering about Upper Egypt, and we had been for some days, after leaving Siout, eagerly watching for their well-known signal flags. One morning, just at dawn, I was awakened by the cry of "Bindera Ingeeleez;" and, looking out from my dormitory, I saw the flutter of a red ensign among some palm-trees at a bend of the river. A few minutes more, and the boat emerged from the grove, and on her tall spars floated the blue and white flag we were in search of.

A shot brought her to, and she was soon moored astern of our boat, and M—— was not a little surprised to see, standing by his bedside, one whom he believed to be three thousand miles away.

Our tent was soon pitched upon the shore; and it did not require the contrast of the lonely life we had been leading so long, to give zest to our long-lost conversation. I recollect few more pleasurable hours than those we passed in the shadow of the tent, looking out upon that strange wild scenery, with the Arabian hills and all their wonders, and the Nile, where lay our two little boats before us, so strangely met, and soon to sever for the north and south.

Meanwhile, our crews got up an entertainment of their own, and were soon dancing and singing as merrily on that desert shore, as if it had been a palace garden. Our servants were actively employed in making barter of their respective superfluities and wants; two or three distant villages contributed their population as spectators, and formed a dark circle of gazers, watching, with solemn silence and earnestness, the proceedings of their white visitors, who probably laughed as much in an hour as Upper Egypt had done in a year. But evening came, and we were obliged to separate; the "homeward bound" had the stream in their favour, and their many oars soon bore them far away; but we could long catch glimpses of the watchfires on their deck, and hear snatches of their wild Arab song.

Two days afterwards, we again caught sight of a familiar flag fluttering over a sandy promontory. By the time it approached, our tent was pitched upon the shore, and carpets and cushions spread for the reception of Lady L. T. and her party, who found a greeting in that tent as warm as the sunshine that shone over it. The fair traveller spoke with pleasure and enthusiasm of all that they had seen; and I do believe that, with all its drawbacks, Egypt is the most interesting and convenient country that a lady can travel over. After dinner, the group in the tent would have surprised the fashionable world that know nothing of adventure beyond a fête champêtre at Fulham. Four turbaned and bearded men sate round a fair and noble lady, whose graceful-looking and fragrant nargileh* puffed and bubbled in harmony with their long chibouques. The complexions of the whole party were almost as dark as those of our crews, and the lady might have passed for Cleopatra in a tableau, but for the ivory white forehead that vindicated its proud claim to Norman blood. As soon as it was dark, we parted. Again our Arab's parting song was raised, shots of salute were fired, and in a few moments more we could only see the glare of their watchfires far away, reflected on the tall, white sails as they receded down the darkening river.

* Water-pipe, consisting of a glass bell, half filled with water, through which a very light and odoriferous tobacco is purified before it passes into a long, variegated tube, and jewelled mouthpiece.

Sometimes we met a raft, formed of earthen vessels manufactured at Keneh, and tied together on a slight raft of palm wood: mugs, jugs, pitchers, and pipkins, formed into a floating island, on which lived its navigators with their wives and children; sometimes a number of bees taking a cruise for change of air and flowery pasture. The Egyptians are very curious in honey; and they say that the greater the variety the bee feeds on, the better is his produce. Therefore, they take their hives up and down the river, true to the nomad instinct of their ancestors; the locality is as much a matter of indifference to them as to their murmuring flocks. The instinct with which the bee finds his way back to the boat, that has perhaps floated miles away since his last excursion, is very remarkable.

Sometimes, again, we met a boat crowded with slaves from Abyssinia and Darfûr, on their way to the man-markets at Siout and Cairo: numbers, both boys and girls, are said to drown themselves on every passage, to avoid the brutality of their owners. Once they are sold, however, as I have before observed, their lot is happier, or rather less wretched, than that of the free Egyptian. As we passed by with song and music as if our life was all one festival, these poor creatures would turn round to gaze after us, and grin till their faces seemed all teeth.

When we anchored for the night near a town, the Turkish governor generally came on board to visit us, accompanied by his janissary and pipe-bearer. We rose as he entered, and made room for him on the divan; then he would lay his hand on his heart, and pray that peace might be upon us; the pipe from our lips was then passed to him, of which he took one whiff; then returned it, with a salute, and his own pipe was handed to him by his submissive slave. There was little variety in the conversation: "English very good; very fond of travelling; know great deal; have very good brandy." This last hint was always complied with, Mahmoud assuring the scrupulous Turk that it was made of grapes, or anything else that occurred to him. Sometimes, the curtain of the cabin was to be drawn before he would taste the forbidden draught; and sometimes he carried off the bottle bodily, "for a daughter, or a friend who was sick."

There is no denying their taste for brandy, and their passion for maraschino; but we invariably found these authorities extremely courteous, complimentary, and willing to oblige us.

Now to our travel once more.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE NILE UP TO THE FIRST CATARACT.

Emblem art thou of Time, memorial Stream!
Which in ten thousand fancies, being here,
We waste, or use, or fashion as we deem;
But, if its backward voice comes ever near,
As thine beside the ruins, how doth it seem
Solemn and stern, sepulchral and severe!

SIR J. HANMER.

In a constant yet varying succession of such scenes, we advance hourly toward the South. Brighter suns, and starrier skies, and stranger scenery—wilder, lonelier, more silent—receive us. Sometimes we travel for hours, and even days through the desert, where nothing but a narrow band of green, that feeds itself from the river exhalations, is visible besides. Then we enter tracts of richly green meadows, flushed with flowers, or wide fields of the blossoming bean that fill the air with their delicious yet delicate perfume. Here are gardens of cucumbers, fenced round with twigs and stalks of Indian corn; there, fields of the Indian corn itself, in which the emperor of Russia horse, plume and all, would be lost, like Gulliver in the wheat fields of the Brobdignags. Then there are little farms of lupines, millet, and sweet pea; banks, gold-speckled with melons; and, haply, a crocodile or two, basking beneath them on the sands, like dragons guarding the golden fruit of the Hesperides.

All this produce and luxuriance is pumped out from the Nile, whose scattered waters are returned with rich usury from the grateful soil that has so unexpectedly received them, in shape of every green thing that the heart of (Egyptian) man or beast can desire. At intervals, all along the river, are to be seen little bowers, or sheds, like those that shelter the swans' nests upon the Thames, and under these the Arab and the buffalo are ceaselessly employed in irrigating the land.

There are two species of water-engines, called the *Shadoof* and the *Sakeeah;* the former consists of a prop fixed in the earth, on which plays a long lever, with a leather bucket attached to one end, counterpoised at the other with a weight; the pumper lets down his leathern bucket into a trench cut from the river, and, assisted by the counterpoise, lifts it up, and empties it into a trench some five or six feet of higher level. Thence it flows along a little canal, branching off into lesser ones among the crops. Sometimes, the level of the land is so high that there are three, or even four pumps and reservoirs, one over the other, each with its reservoir from which the Arab above pumps

out. This is the most severe labour in Egypt, yet it is so associated with ideas of home, and perhaps of prosperity, that it is the burden of almost every country song. The exile and the soldier (terms synonymous in Egypt) use this word as we might do "our hearths." Notwithstanding the poetry of this labour, however, no man, not even the sinewy Arab, can stand it for more than two hours at a time, so they work in gangs in the shade, the reliefs sleeping away their alternate hours of repose.

The *Sakeeah* is a large water-wheel raised on a platform, and turned by two buffaloes; behind these, a black little naked urchin sits on the splinter-bar, continually goading his somnambulistic team. The creaking of these wheels, mingled with the monotonous drip of water, is not unmusical, and, as they are generally at work night and day, I often listened to their sound with pleasure, so blended is it with other sounds, and refined by distance and the clear atmosphere, which has as enriching an effect on simple sounds as a prism would have on a quaker's coat, making it gay as the jacket of a hussar.

These sakeeahs produce each as much irrigation as five shadoofs, and are calculated at 50,000 throughout Egypt and Nubia. So vital are they to the land, that Mehemet Ali supplies the buffaloes to work them, for which, however, he charges twenty dollars a-year, as a tax upon each wheel.

We passed an evening at Keneh, to collect some stores and write some letters. A Greek merchant from Sennaar, seeing lights in our cabin, came on board to claim the hospitality of pipes and coffee. He spoke Italian very fluently, and gave us an animated and interesting account of his desert journeys, and his trade, which lay in ivory, precious stones, gums, slaves, and other tropical luxuries. He inveighed with all the energy of an English radical against the unjust and impolitic restrictions laid by Mehemet Ali on the slave trade. "Would you believe it," he exclaimed in a tone of the most virtuous indignation, "the Pasha has levied a tax of five dollars on each slave imported into Egypt! Why, sir, it amounts to a prohibition, and will be the ruin of the trade!"

Some of our crew were very lax in their religious observances, but others were very zealous in their devotion. We had been several days without touching land, and this evening Mohammed availed himself of being on terra firma at sunset. He had no carpet, poor fellow, to purify the ground, but he spread his capote, and knelt down with an abstraction and apparent devotion that would have become a purer faith: his hands were clasped on his bosom, and at every utterance of the Holy Name, he pressed his forehead to the ground. All this time, an ugly negro, named Asgalani, who was a free-thinker and a wit, was amusing the crew by endeavouring to "put him out;" and this scoffer was greatly cheered by the rest of the crew, as he skipped about him, squeaking like a monkey, barking like a dog, crowing like a cock, grinning in his face, and inquiring "how he was off for a Prophet?" This did not for a moment disturb the gravity of the worshipper; and, when he rose from his devotions, he went to his work with perfect good humour and disregard of the joker.

Our impatience to proceed became greater every day, until we should reach the Thebes, but the evening fell dead calm, and we lay moored to the bank at Keneh; * as the Arab sailors cannot, or will not, tow the boat at night. About midnight, I was awakened by a faint ripple against the bank; then came a breeze, sighing through the rigging, which was immediately followed by poking Mahmoud on the ribs through the window. Up sprung that indefatigable dragoman. "Yallough!" shouted he, in a voice that made the crew spring from their dreams; "Yallough!" echoed they, and the hawser was loosed, the sails spread, and our little boat darted away over the star-spangled stream, tottering and bending under the pressure of the brisk breeze on her enormous sails. Soon the crew subsided into their respective holes; the men at the sheets might have fancied themselves within them, and only the faithful Bacheet, our pilot, watched throughout the night with me. I did not sleep, for some of the romance of youth came back upon my spirit, as we caught the first glimpse of mighty Thebes—unequalled amid all the world's wonders.

A wanderer over the wide world from my youth up, I have visited most of the scenes consecrated by the power and the poetry of ancient times. I have stood upon the hill of Tara, where the kings of Ireland once ruled, and the assembled Thanes debated the vain but glorious deeds of conquest that their Bards inspired, and I have heard demagogues declaiming there to the jingle of the poverty-stricken peasants' tribute. I have roamed among the Highland glens, where Ossian sang, and chieftains warred; and found the kilted dandy laying aside his rifle to partake of the paté de Perigord aux truffes, which the canny Gael had spread out upon the

* Keneh is the port of the Nile in connection with Cosseir, on the Red Sea. The desert-way between the two is only seventy miles in length, and offers serious rivalry to Suez as a candidate for railway or canal to connect the Indian trade with that of Europe. This is also one of the Mecca routes.

heather for his repast. I have visited the battle-field of Hastings, where my Norman-robber ancestors helped to triumph over that freedom which they afterwards restored with interest to the Saxon; the plain of Tours, the Oak-tree of Guernica, the Valhalla of the Teuton, the Capitol of imperial Rome, and the Acropolis of republican Athens. I have smoked my cigar or my chibouque upon them all, and mused and marvelled at the vain schemes and fleeting energies of my fellow-men, and at the sustained purpose and enthusiasm that ran undying along the successive representatives of their perishable race. And here is Thebes, isolated among its deserts and forgotten ages, bearing awful testimony to the nothingness of mankind in its mightiest development. The first faint streak of morning reveals the vast propylæa of Carnak darkening against its orient glow. Now daylight shines on the precipitous mountains, perforated with the tombs of the kings, and the sun's first ray seems to waken Memnon into sight, if no longer into sound. A cloud, rich as a prism with all the colours that ever glowed, hangs over the Eastern horizon, and, when the sun shines over it, we are moored under the gigantic columns of Luxor, that fling their shadow over this Portsmouth of the Pharaohs. On these waters, the armaments of Sesostris once swarmed, and their anxious crews hurried, and strove, and thought that *their* present moment was the only critical point of time. Now they lie mummied, monarch and minion; the manly bosoms that beat for glory, and the gentler hearts that beat for them alone—all lie now at peace, in pickle, unless the antiquary or the cockney purchase their embalmed carcasses for the student, or the citizen to scrutinize and stare at. Little did the anxious embalmer of an imperial corpse think what pains he was bestowing to please Paddington or Cheapside; little did the expiring Pharoah dream that Mr. Tomkins should be his resurrection angel!

One glimpse at Luxor, one gallop over the plain of Carnak, and away! The wind is fair for the regions of the far South; the Mountains of the Moon lie before us, and we must reach our goal, wherever it may be, before the terrible khampseen comes on; and before we pause to examine those marvellous revelations that have taken even our excited fancy by surprise, those whose first glance is enough for a month's memory.

The breeze only lasted until it bore us out of sight of Thebes, which, for the information of the young, I may as well remark is composed, so to speak, of Gournou, the Memnonium, Medinet Abou on the Lybian side, of Carnak and Luxor on the Arabian. These are detached villages of ruins, some ten miles apart, but once connected by the dwellings of those who worshipped or paid court in these temples and palaces.

We passed the governor of Egypt, who was sitting under a canopy in a neat galley pulled by ten half-naked Arabs; an escort of four or five boats filled with officers and soldiers attended him. Strange is the power of discipline; these very soldiers, a few months ago, were peasants, shuddering at the name of conscription, and ready to resist it to the death. They had been caught, however, and sent in chains, as usual, to Cairo. Here, under the lash of the drill sergeant, they had contracted such a taste for military service that they were now guarding the tyrant of their quondam friends, and enabling him to enforce the dreaded conscription among their fellow-countrymen.

We traversed a good deal of desert scenery, leaving Hermonthis on our right: and, towards evening of the second day after leaving Thebes, reached Esneh, the most picturesque and amusing city on the Upper Nile. Sycamore-trees, of magnificent size and luxuriant foliage, form boulevards all round the environs, beyond which lie gardens studded with kiosks. Under the shade of the trees that overhang the banks were very varied groups reposing, the pipe their only attribute in common. Here some officers, with scarlet caps, and embroidered jackets, and petticoat-trousers, recline on a carpet. There a village Sheikh, with long white beard and green turban, and eyes so large and so much the colour of his face that they seemed covered with the same skin, only varnished. Around him was his little escort, his pipe-bearer, and camel-driver, most submissive and humble functionaries, but according to patriarchal usage they squatted at their ease, and chattered round their old master unrestrainedly. Near this party a slave-ship had just moored to the bank, and the captives were allowed to go on shore to stretch their cramped limbs. They stood leaning against the trees, or strewn about the banks, naked except for a shred of a sheet folded round their loins. Many of these were young girls of beautiful form, which gave to their various attitudes a wild grace that sat strangely on those children of suffering.

Mahmoud went into the town to make some necessary purchases; for our parts we had registered a vow not to set our feet upon the shore until we reached the first cataract; and if Thebes with its mummied kings had failed to seduce us, Esneh, with its noble portico, and all its Almé, was not to be yielded to. As we lay upon our divans, restraining our impatience, with our pipes and the bright stars, that set the lesson so well read by Goëthe, "Ohne hast, ohne rast,"

a stir among the crowds on shore, and the gleam of lanterns, announced a visit from the governor's lieutenant, he himself fortunately being busied at Thebes in making canals and conscripts. By this time, we were so much accustomed to grand Turkish company, that we only regarded it in the light of the loss of an hour's sailing, and of a bottle or two of brandy. Information these people had none, or at least none to give, and their visits were occupied in taking a whiff out of our pipes, and a long smoke out of their own; a profession of unbounded regard and proffers of service, and a request for wine. This Turk had never tasted maraschino before, so he found our society peculiarly attractive, and even proposed to smoke another pipe. As he was rather tipsy, however, we thought we had done civility enough, particularly as the night-breeze was now stirring among the palms, that tossed their plumes towards Æthiopia, and we obeyed their signal. Our friend departed with a bottle under each arm of his janizary "to make his balance true," and his pipe-bearer almost immediately returned for another bottle for a brother of the governor's "who was ill." Assuring the messenger that brandy would be fatal to him, whatever his complaint, we hoisted, or rather let fall our sails, and stood away for Assouan.

The next day, the mountains on both sides of the river ran down in very picturesque disorder to the water's edge, then suddenly ceased, and for many miles the country on either side was level as the Delta, and the eye ached in search of horizons which the clearness of the atmosphere rendered so indefinitely distant.

This being an idle day among the crew, owing to the shady breeze that blew over the level country, some of the sailors recollected that they had the ophthalmia, and came to beg me to cure it. Every Englishman is supposed to possess unbounded medical skill, besides a knowledge of where all the buried treasure lies, for which we are always risking our lives in tombs and desert places.

I was determined to try my skill, and began with a fellow who had two eyes, knowing that, if I extinguished one, it would be doing the proprietor a favour, most of the party, as I have observed, possessing only one eye each, that is, our crew of twelve had only seventeen eyes among them. Into one of these seventeen, which was coated with a dull grey film, I poured a solution of sulphate of zinc, that made him yell with agony; he ran dancing about the deck amid the laughter of the crew, one of whom, with great presence of mind, snatching up the reed-pipe, played an Egyptian gig, which redoubled the amusement of the by-sitters.

Notwithstanding this demonstration of suffering, another ophthalmist lay down immediately on the deck, opening his solitary eye for the burning drop. I applied a weaker solution in this instance, which, as it gave the patient less pain, induced him to consider himself ill-used.

Every morning and evening, for a week, I had half a score of anxious eyes gazing through their films at my 'prentice hand, as it applied the magic drop. Strange to say, it cured them, and that effectually in most cases; and, what is more remarkable, it did not blind any of them.

Thenceforward, my practice became widely extended; not only was I applied to if any of the crew got a kick on his shins, or a bruise, however slight, on his fingers, but wherever the boat touched the shore, the halt, and maimed, and blind, swarmed around me, and were only too happy to get a bit of sticking-plaster for a consumption, or a rhubarb pill for a broken limb.

My modesty was exerted in vain, to undeceive them as to my medical skill; they thought the plea was merely want of charity, and knowing how often the mind ministers comfort to the body, I latterly gave way, like Father Mathew in Ireland, to their pertinacious superstitions; and, by dint of colocynth and other abominations, gave hope to half the Said.

The night after we left Esneh, it blew a gale of wind. The large unwieldy boat leapt and plunged among the waves with about as much agility as a frisky crocodile might practise the Polka, and the interest, if not the danger, of the exercise so novel to our gliding experience, kept us awake until a late hour. At length we turned in, which, in my case at least, was no easy operation. Having an unconquerable dislike to carnivorous insects, I was provided with Levinge's apparatus, which consists of a gauze tent suspended from the ceiling, joined on to a wide cotton sack, into which you creep and tie yourself, when *in*. This complicated piece of machinery constituted my whole sleeping apparatus, with the exception of a light mattress spread over the locker.

I had just fallen asleep, when I was startled by a chorus of exclamations, something between prayer and curse, and a shock that knocked me off my plank. The storm was howling, the waves leaping in over the boat, the Arabs shrieking, and R. calling, "Come out, come out, she's going down." Tangled in my sack, I could no more escape than a precocious chicken from its shell, so I abstracted my thoughts to the pleasing contemplation of faithless sultanas in the Bosphorus, whose sensations I could too easily comprehend. When I did emerge, I found

the boat had struck upon a sandbank, the wind had turned her nearly over, the sails were cut away, and ten Arabs were up to their necks among the crocodiles, endeavouring to get her off. The waves, however, seemed determined to get her *on;* and the contest, between us and the elements, continued for hours, but ended in our victory and return to repose, while the boat dashed away again over the turbulent stream.

Scarcely had we resumed our pillows, when we were disturbed by the smell of fire, in the neighbourhood of our powder, too, which was sufficient to have blown us all to kabobs.* The flames were extinguished by a sudden shift of the wind, that laid us gunwale-under, and deluged our decks; the boat righted, the embers hissed, the gale moderated, the Nile calmed, and, having thus escaped from the attacks of all four elements, we resumed our slumbers, the watch first, of course.

I relate these trifling incidents, not because they are very romantic, or happened only once, but to convey an idea of the general character of Nile experience.

We passed Edfou in the night, and awoke to the view of scenery altogether differing from that which had accompanied us so long. A low line of hills had started up from the level land, here and there pinnacled by a ruined tower, a sole survivor and testimony of cities, nameless now even to the imaginative antiquary.

These hills open into glens, once gardens, perhaps, or populous thoroughfares; but now the lonely Arab goatherd, or the wolf, are the only disturbers of their silence. Not a village is in sight, but a belt of the richest vegetation borders the river; waving corn, some green, some golden; lupines in flower, beans, and other fragrant blossoms. This is bordered by a line of rushes, and then the desert spreads abroad its interminable tracts of low sandy undulations.

We are now approaching the utmost boundary of ancient Egypt, beyond which lay Ethiopia, where Jupiter used to dine once a year, in a quiet way, with the religious fashionables of that respectable nation.

As we approach the ancient Syene, the hills grow loftier and darker. Palm groves again ornament the valleys, enormous masses of granite shoot up from the river, a pretty villa appears on the left, a ruined castle on the right, and we come into sight of the most romantic spot of Egypt, which seems, like an artful tragedy, to keep its best scene for its last.

* Small shreds of roast meat sold in Eastern bazaars.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ASSOUAN, AND NATURAL HISTORY OF EGYPT.

What have ye gathered from Afric's strand,
As ye swept the breadth of that fragrant land?
The rose-coloured granite Syéné boasts,
The marble that forms her river coasts,
The date-tree fruit, and the rich perfume
Of balm, and of spice-buds, and rose's bloom.
F. HEMANS.

ASSOUAN, called in Coptic Souan, which means "an opening," stands at the entrance of the Valley of the Nile. Here the river, narrowed into a rocky channel, displays a sportiveness and activity elsewhere unknown to it, except among the cataracts. The island of Elephantina, very rich in very broken ruins, divides the river opposite the town; and shaded with palm-trees, and carpeted with gay weeds, seems still to lay claim to its ancient epithet of the "Isle of Flowers." A grove of palms stands between the modern town and the river; and above and beyond this grove tower dark-red granite cliffs, crowned with ruins, that give it a very picturesque appearance. Beyond this lie traces of the ancient Syene; and, among the rocky eminences, the track of wheels still points out where ran the ancient streets. The denunciation of Ezekiel is indeed fulfilled:—"The tower of Syene has fallen from her pride of power;" and nothing can be imagined more utterly lonely than this deserted city. Not a sound was to be heard, except the roar of the cataract and the twitter of the solitary sparrow. Ornithologists assert that this hermit-bird is only to be found at Rome, Agrigentum, and some other place; but, if the only creature of his kind found in a place like this does not bear that name, he deserves it. Many Cufic inscriptions and some hieroglyphics are visible on these rock-ruins; and in the quarries the mark of the chisel is as fresh as if the workmen were at dinner round the corner there, whilst a huge obelisk stands out from its quarry ready for removal. There is a cemetery, too, in the neighbourhood, which seems less lonely in its silence than the city to whose millions it once afforded their only real rest; and, that nothing might be wanted to the desolation of the scene, a vaguely-wailing wind came over the desert as we watched the sun go down, and seemed full at once of prophecy and of mournful memories.

Immediately on our landing, a crowd came down from the village to sell their little commodities, or to stare at the white strangers. Darker, but more regular features, and smooth, shining hair, bespoke a change of population. These are, for the

most part, Nubians; but there is a considerable mixture of Saracenic and even of Bosniak blood, left here three hundred and thirty years ago, in garrison, by Sultan Selim.

A slave-caravan had just arrived from the interior; and we found numerous groups of slaves, apparently unguarded, strewn about among the palm-groves. Some of the old women were making bread of millet-flour on a smooth stone, but the greater part were either sleeping or chatting under their familiar palm.

In the evening, the Greek, to whom I have alluded in the tenth chapter, paid us a visit. He was a physician, and endeavoured to support himself by his profession, but he complained that the people were dreadfully healthy; and the few patientshe had were so poor, that they could not afford to be cured of fever, dysentery, ophthalmia, and one or two nameless complaints. We sat chatting with this murderer until very late; when, just over the temple on the isle of Elephantina, I observed a pale column of light flashing from the palm-trees upward into the deep blue sky. We thought it was a lunar rainbow, though the moon was only three days old, and there was not a vapour in all the sky. Our friend, the man of blood, called it "l'Arco di Noah," and the natives, "Abou Saheel," which means the "lucky patriarch." This was the comet that created such a sensation in England; but we of Assouan, Greek, English, and Egyptian, took it to be one of those

> "Tearless rainbows, such as span
> The unclouded skies of Peri-Sthan."

Arrived at Assouan, the old Syene, we have reached the boundary betwixt Egypt and Æthiopia; and, before we enter on the latter country, it seems fit to take a survey of that which we are about to leave. Though I have spared the reader the description of many a spot that wearied my foot to explore, and my thought to investigate, let him not therefore suppose that such places were unvisited, or that the spirit of adventure slept among such stirring scenes. It would not be just, however, to Egypt, to pass over in utter silence the marvellous objects which her ancient inhabitants have left the modern world to gaze at and puzzle over. I shall therefore run rapidly over the places of chief interest that we visited, as far as Denderah. From thence the country is so rich in wonders that we deferred exploring it until our return northward should afford us leisure to enjoy it.

I will not return to Alexandria, or the Delta, but re-embarking in imagination at Cairo, touch lightly on each spot which modern life or ancient legend invests with particular interest. These stand thickly along the river banks, and rapidly succeed each other in such panoramic view as the winds or calms permit the traveller's eye to take in. Previously to such a muster, however, let us take a glance at the animate and inanimate nature that surrounds them, and give the precedence due to the country before the towns.

The Valley of the Nile, which constitutes Egypt, was beyond doubt once an arm of the Mediterranean, and corresponded to that of the Red Sea. In those days, the barrier of granite, which now lies strewn in fragments round Assouan, was unbroken; and, by means of such embankment of the river and its inundations, Nubia enjoyed that fertility which their disruption transferred to Egypt. When the vast volume of water, accumulated above Philœ, poured down upon the present Valley of the Nile, it must have carried with it débris, and soil, and slime enough to fill up the gulph for many a mile. This deposit continued to increase until it drove back the sea to the site of the Delta, and, finally, almost within the memory of history, to its present shores. The same process has been continued ever since with such regularity, that a chronological calculation has been made of its deposits at the base of monuments, which harmonizes singularly with our received dates. From Assouan a chain of hills continues on either side to Cairo, almost uninterruptedly, a distance of about six hundred miles, passing from the granite of Syene into an argillaceous sandstone, alternately with carbonate of lime, and finally becoming altogether calcareous. There are various modifications of this structure which would have no business here, no more than mineralogical details; but who does not like to hear of precious stones? Emerald mines sound temptingly, but alas! they have ceased to be worked latterly. Chrysoberl, chalcedony, and jasper abound among the pebbles that roll down in theNile; and the more useful but less romantic substances of iron, sulphur, nitre, and natron were once, as the latter are now, found in great abundance. Quarries, too, of alabaster are only waiting the artist's chisel to turn into deposits of vases, statues, and the most delicate lamps in the world.

The mystics used to teach, among other valuable dogmas, that the globe was a great animal, its bones were rocks, its flesh and skin were soil, its arteries rivers, its hair was vegetation, and we and the inferior animals mere animalculæ, essential to its health. Under this system the osteology of Egypt is very simple, the principal portion of its bones

only requiring some phosphates to become identical with those of humanity.

The *skin* of Egypt is Nile slime, of which I subjoin an analysis, made by a skilful and valued friend of mine,* who has twice visited the country.

| | |
|---|---|
| Silesia | 70 0 |
| Alumine | 8 0 |
| Lime | 6 0 |
| Potash | 2 0 |
| Soda | 2 0 |
| Magnesia | 2 0 |
| Sulphate of lime | 1 0 |
| Phosphate of lime | 2 0 |
| Peroxide of iron | 5 0 |
| ——— magnesia | 0 50 |
| Water | 2 0 |
| | 100 50 |

The *hair* has less variety than the Flora of most countries. Very few plants are indigenous, and these are mostly of a pale, delicate appearance, that well becomes their home, the desert; but which would appear to great disadvantage among the better-fed plants of Europe.

The native trees are the palms, the sycamore (which is called "the incorruptible," and of which mummy cases were made), the gumacacia, the white and black poplar, the cypress, the olive, willow, myrtle, and tamarisk. The plantain, oak, and beech, have been partially introduced, and the fruit-trees of every climate seem to prosper here, with the exception of the pine-apple and cherry, which do not thrive. If there be any fruit more especially Egyptian, it is the melon, cucumber, and other watery plants, which abound in perfection throughout the country.

The Valley of the Nile has been, in all times, remarkable for its produce of wheat, with which, under its Roman tyrants, it was obliged to supply the canaille of the imperial city, to enable them to eat bread in idleness. I am told it is of an inferior quality; but it makes excellent bread, white, light, and well-tasted. Like its cultivators, it is always bearded, and looks like barley. Its increase has been estimated at from fifty to one hundred fold; but now, they say, it rarely produces more than twenty or thirty fold, except in very favourable localities. Barley is principally cultivated as food for horses; and, being satisfied with a sandy soil, although it requires much moisture, they contrive to get ten or twelve fold increase on the seed.

Dourah, or Indian corn, is very extensively cultivated, as it does not require irrigation, though Nature only knows how it fills its gigantic stalks with sap in the arid soils, over which it waves its seas of verdure. The Fellaheen, or peasants, make bread of its flour, which they bake with its own straw, and finish it by building cabins with its stalks, intermixed with mud; it yields from fifteen to forty increase. Maize, millet, and rice are also cultivated; the latter is denied antiquity in Egypt, as it does not appear in the monuments. It was probably brought from India, and is only cultivated in the low-lands of the Delta, and latterly in the swamps of Sennaar. The sugar-cane thrives well; but as yet it is not cultivated in sufficient quantities, or quality, to supply Egypt. Beans, peas, lentils, lupines, and onions, and all kitchen-herbs and vegetables, grow almost wild.

With respect to the Animal Kingdom, we have already spoken of the human species, which appears to be rapidly diminishing under the enlightened tyranny of Mehemet Ali, having shrunk one-fifth within the last ten years. The other animals seem to have followed Egypt, when it went a pleasuring on the Nile from the interior; at least, there are no animals found in Egypt that do not also exist in Nubia and Abyssinia.

The horse deserves a chapter to himself, which he shall have in speaking of Syria; but he appears to advantage also in this country, where a good practical mixture of races has taken place, between those of Dongola, of Arabia, and even of Europe. The Egyptian horse is taller than the generality of Arabians; his eye full of fire and intelligence; his head well set on; his forehand rather straight for our taste, but fine at the withers; his quarters are well-turned; his barrel, good; his legs, clean; his pasterns, long; and, altogether, he is the most *serviceable*-looking horse I have seen in the East. He is found on all the tombs and on all sculptures, as well as in the stables.

The camel is considered an alien, because his antiquity is not blazoned on the monuments; but he is mentioned in Gen. xi. 16. He is, whether as dromedary or camel, the most useful animal in the East. The former is, in fact, the thoroughbred camel; he is called *Hadjim* in Arabic, from being the pilgrim's (Hadj) bearer. He is trained for the saddle, and will travel from nine to twelve miles an hour for ten hours together, or for a month at a slower pace. The camel, in a country where wheel-conveyances are unknown, acts the double part of a dray and a dray-horse; he will carry half a ton on his back for short distances, or eight hundred-weight on a journey. Every one has heard of the epithet "ship of the desert," as applied to these creatures; but the expression is a paraphrase of the original term applied to

* Dr. Noyes.

ships by the Arabs, who call them "camels of the sea." This appears a most natural figure of speech to those who have watched a fleet of these animals, towering over the undulations of the wide desert.

The buffalo is also an alien, according to the sculptures and monumental paintings; but he is a very useful animal, for all that: they supply the country with water, by their exertions in the sakeeyeh, and the people with milk. Here their labours end, for beef is forbidden by Mehemet Ali, on account of the murrain of late years which has carried off 320,000 of these creatures. Though the buffalo is not found among the monumental paintings, the common bull figures there frequently. At Hermonthis, in particular, there is the very *ideal* of this animal, as an English breeder would imagine him. It much resembles, as R. informed me, the figure of a bull on an old Sicilian coin, which Lord Spencer exhibited at an Agricultural Meeting, as presenting every quality as to points that could be desired. It seems curious that art and practical science should agree on the same model.

Sheep and goats abound in Egypt with little variety. Dogs live in a state of nature, are generally harmless, and, what is remarkable, considering their vast numbers and the heat of the climate, they never go mad. Cats were worshipped by the ancient Egyptians, and so esteemed by Mahomet, that his favourite having gone to sleep on a corner of his robe, he cut it off when obliged to rise, rather than disturb her. This fact or fiction secures her great popularity among the Moslems; and there is even at Cairo, as I have before observed, a sort of almshouse for decayed cats.

The wolf, fox, jackal, and hyæna, come sometimes under the sportsman's aim; and the wild boar is found in great numbers in the Delta.

The hippopotamus is scarcely ever seen, in these days, below the Second Cataract, though there is a report of one of the species appearing near Damietta, in 1836; and there was one seen last year near the Wady Halfa. The giraffe is almost as rare, but is sometimes seen in very lonely places: the gazelle is found on the border of the desert, and in the markets of Cairo.

The ichneumon, or Pharaoh's rat, was adored by the ancient Egyptians, on account of its destroying the crocodile in his adult state, as, they asserted, by jumping down his throat when he yawned, and eating its way out from his stomach; but particularly for his propensity for sucking the eggs of this animal. These creatures are very numerous, and are often domesticated like cats, to destroy rats and mice. Lynxes, foumarts, and jerboas also abound.

As to birds—fowls, geese, and very few ducks, are found in the poultry-yards: wild ducks in clouds, wild geese, pelicans, vultures, falcons, hawks, eagles, buzzards, and all the night-birds down to bats, abound in incredible multitudes. The most peculiar birds to English eyes are the ibis and the Nile-goose, the latter perhaps the most richly plumaged bird in creation. The real ibis is only to be found (if there) at Lake Menzaleh, where it makes its nest among the stalks of the only true papyrus that is found.

There is something singular in these two surviving specimens of antique animal and vegetable races being found limited to the same locality. The common ibis is snow-white, and of a very graceful form, resembling a very well-made stork in miniature. It hovers in flocks over the corn-fields, and, contrasted with the rich green, its hue is only less beautiful than when seen gliding gracefully and slowly on its wide wings among the dark forests of the palm.

As to insects, imagine everything disgusting, and ingeniously horrid, and monstrous, that can crawl, creep, buzz, or bite; imagine them in every place where they are most unwelcome and most nauseous, and you will form some idea of the entomology of Egypt. Volumes could not enumerate their species.

Of reptiles, the most respectable is the crocodile: the most classical, the cerastes, or horned asp, which baffled Cæsar: of the former, I have before spoken; the latter is avoided even by the serpent-charmer, on account of its deadly bite. Other serpents of various species abound, and we had several on board our boat, which, having had their fangs torn out, were quite harmless.

There are two species of tortoise, abundance of scorpions, bull-frogs, whose nightly croakings amount to bellowing; and, lastly, the only apparently useful reptile that is known, the monitor lizard, which utters shrill cries whenever a crocodile approaches. As it is found in the same localities, it is as useful as the rattle in the snake's tail, which, like the same instrument in the hands of ancient watchmen, seemed intended to neutralize all danger.

As to fish, I caught some hundreds, and never caught two of the same species. Their names in Arabic would tend little to enlighten the most scientific reader, and of their habits I am ignorant. I am told that salmon of immense size and delicate flavour are taken in the Nile, and that perch abound; but I never saw fish that could be identified in English.

As this dull chapter will probably find few readers, I may as well introduce into it some accounts of the canals in existence, and *in petto*. These canals are the very life of

agricultural Egypt, and require all the power and vigilance of the government to keep them in repair. It is evident that, among this indolent, narrow-minded people, who never look to second causes, that the inhabitant at the entrance of a canal would never keep it in order for the sake of those at a distance, so that government is obliged to take their management entirely into its own hands. This responsibility is considerably facilitated by the despotic nature of its executive: does a bank want repair, or a branch require widening, the surveying officer reports to the Pasha. By the return of the dromedary mail, the Sheikh of the village in the nearest locality is ordered to march fifty or a hundred, men, women, and children, as the case may be, to the spot in question. The command of the Pasha sends them to labour, the kurbash * keeps them to it.

The principal canal in Egypt is called after Joseph, though by most geographers supposed to be the work of the Nile itself. It commences near Mellawi, and runs through the Said to the Fayoum, where it exhausts itself in many branches.

The next canal in importance is that of Moeys, which extends from near Cairo to Lake Menzaleh, a distance of 120 miles, and is navigable all the way. The Mahmoudieh canal has already been described; besides which, there are half a dozen, all very important, no doubt, to the Egyptians, but little interesting to the general reader.

The effect of these canals is immensely increased by banks, or dams, that regulate the supply of water into the lower districts, as well as by large reservoirs, that retain the waters of the inundation, and economise its outlay.

The works of this nature, carried into effect by Mehemet Ali, are incredible; they extend over a space of 104,356,667 cubic metres. M. Linant, the Pasha's able and indefatigable chief engineer, has proposed a plan for embankments to cross the Nile, near the junction of the Damietta and Rosetta branches, which would produce amazing results, not only for the Delta, but for the lands on either side the river as far as Cairo. Its importance may be estimated by the calculation that it would save the employment of 25,000 sakeeyehs, involving the labour of 25,000 men and 50,000 oxen.† These canals are exclusively interesting to Egypt. I now turn to those that interest the whole commercial and travelling world.

* A whip made of hippopotamus' hide.

† Any person curious in these matters may consult "*Histoire sommaire de l'Egypte sous Méhémet Ali*," par M. Mengin; the "*Sémaphore d'Orient;*" and Clot Bey's inestimable "*Aperçu général sur l'Egypte.*"

The formation of a canal from Suez to the Mediterranean is first in importance. It would shorten the passage to India from the Levant by 8,000 miles; that from London by 5,500 miles; that from New York by 3,000, to say nothing of

> "Many a day and many a dreadful night
> Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape."

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Sesostris attempted to unite the Red Sea with the Nile, and Nechos, says Herodotus, attempted to carry out his views with the cost of 100,000 lives in the enterprise. Fortunately for the population of Egypt an Oracle forbade him to advance the undertaking, saying that it would "open Egypt to the invasion of strangers." Probably the same Oracle, issuing from his own profound brains, may have operated on the mind of Mehemet Ali, who certainly has hitherto not displayed his usual energies in emulating the useful labours of his predecessors.

It would seem that this canal was at length completed, and not only conveyed shipping from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf, but by irrigation converted the desert into a garden, on which rose (and fell), with its fructifying waters, the cities of Heroöpolis, Phlagriopolis, and Serapeum, near Arsinoë. Trajan and Amru re-opened this canal at intervals of about 500 years, but now it has vanished, except a small portion reaching into Cairo, called the Kalisch.

If this canal once existed, there is no reason that another, infinitely more important, might not be created and maintained across the same deserts.

The level of the Red Sea is thirty feet higher than that of the Mediterranean, and fifteen feet higher than the lowest period of the Nile at Cairo, but five feet *lower* than the Nile at its highest period. By means of the latter fact, turned to good account, the desert could be irrigated by fresh water during the very season in which that process is necessary.

A railway from Cairo to Suez is more popular, and perhaps more feasible. It is asserted that the cost would little exceed that incurred for rails and sleepers, as the level is already obtained by the banks that have been erected, and also those of the ancient canal.

The desert, between Keneh and Cosseir, affords the shortest interval between the Nile and the Red Sea; it is only seventy miles in length, and offers but slight undulations of ground. Should the Atmospheric Railways come into use here, they would obviate every difficulty of level, and the houses of the stationary engines might constitute a useful

chain of forts, whose guns could command the whole range of the journey. The water is deep, and the anchorage good, moreover, at Cosseir; and the most difficult and dangerous part of the navigation of the Red Sea would be thus avoided, and exchanged for the safe and tranquil navigation of the Nile.

I have to ask pardon for this dry digression, and now return, repentant, to what more immediately concerns my task. This chapter has, however, run into such lengths, with an account of the beasts, birds, and fishes, and the ark which contains them, that the cities will require another chapter to themselves.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CITIES OF EGYPT.

We have passed over cities in song renowned;
Silent they lie with the desert around;
We have passed o'er the river whose tide hath rolled
All dark with the warrior-blood of old.

F. HEMANS.

WHO has not voyaged on the Rhine, and, as he glided down that noble river, felt an absorbing interest in the busy cities and calm solitudes; the vineyards and fortresses; the castled crags, where the banners of old History are still visible to the imaginative eye; and the deep glens, where lurks many a legend believed by the imaginative heart; all following in succession as uninterrupted, and more rapid than the thought which strives to follow!

Imagine, then, a river, flowing from the undiscovered depths of Africa, wider, larger, mightier far; whose shores are lined with cities, and temples that were already in ruins when the sources of the Rhine were as unknown as are now the sources of the Nile.*

For a distance of eight hundred miles you glide along this sacred and mysterious stream; not with the rapid rush of the steam-vessel, but tranquilly and thoughtfully, as in a Venetian gondola, under the shade of the African palm, and among the lotus lilies of Egyptian mythology, fanned by airs redolent of perfumes rare even in our luxurious drawing-rooms. On the desert sands the giraffe and the gazelle are grazing; on the banks the crocodile is basking; the pelican is gliding by you, and the ibis soars over the mounds of buried cities

"with pale white wing,
Like phantom o'er a grave."

* "The Rhine takes its rise in the most hidden parts of the earth, in a region of perpetual night, amidst forests for ever inaccessible to human footsteps."—Pliny, iii. 24, who writes in a time when the travellers of his day spoke of ruined Egypt as we do now.

Here, you pass a column, or a propylon, sole remnant of some city once more populous than the whole surrounding lonely region now; there, some mud-built walls show where the modern Egyptian dwells, in himself as wide differing from his predecessor, probably, as does his clayey shed from their magnificent edifices.

You are traversing the same river that has borne the Egyptian, the Ethiopian, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Roman, and the Saracen; and, between the stream of time which Memory traces, and the practical one on which you float, there seems such a strict yet confusing analogy, that the Pyramids might almost seem the milestones by which Time counted his progress; and the cities, in their varied stages of decay, brick-and-mortar epochs by which Memory traces the progress of Time's stream. From city to village, and from temple to tomb, there is many a deep glen and wild desert intervening; but these leave no blank to the attentive ear and eye. If the city has its history, and the tomb its epitaph, the mountain and the valley have their legends; and this traditionary lore seems at least as ancient and as pure as the prouder history, that is more indebted to its oral voice than it would fain allow. The temples and the monuments relate their own stories in paragraphs of hawks, bulls, chariots, conquerors, eyes, serpents, and other idolatrous-looking letters; and the glen and desert also have their stories, and they are borne witness to by living illustrations.

"Lo, upon yonder mountain that o'ershadows Cairo," says the peasant, "rests the imprint of Mahommed's sacred foot; the palm-trees bend over it to shadow it, and the sacred pigeon loves this memorial of him whose life it saved."* Hark! over the desert sounds the cry of the karawan,† chanting its solitary hymn, inspired by Heaven to remind the traveller of his prayer: "lak, lak, lak, la shariáh Kalak, fil moolk:" (to Thee, to Thee, to Thee, belongs Almighty power, without partner). And see, beside that well, where the aged and shrivelled trunk of a gigantic sycamore is crowned with branches and leaves as fresh and green as in its youth: that sacred tree sheltered the Holy Family during their flight into Egypt; beneath that tree they rested, and the breath of the Child conferred immortality on its friendly foliage.

There is a very wide, and wild, and lonely glen, near the Mountain of the Birds, opening on the desert through a chasm in the rocks: this is the Egyptian Esdraelon, where Typhon and Osiris are to fight on the last

* See chapter in El Islam.
† The curlew.

day, — in the cause of Destruction and Creation. In the mountain close at hand there is a fissure of the rock, to which all the birds of the air resort at daybreak once a year, and each insinuates its beak into that cleft: when the destined victim comes, the fissure closes, and the expiated fowls fly away until the following year.

With such stories every striking spot is rife, and they are told, not with any doubt, or incredulity, as the Scotch and Irish peasants relate *their* marvels, but with as much faith as if the narrator had been eye-witness to the scenes that he relates. Comparatively few traditions survive concerning the ruins; but the Pyramids have their oral history, as compendious as any that has yet been written, and perhaps as true. Their founder was Gian ben Gian, the pre-Adamite monarch of the world, who also built Baalbec and Istakar,* in (what was to *him*) the neighbourhood. The Pyramids have their spirit, too, like other mountains; and that of the southern one appears in the shape of a beautiful girl, who wanders there at sunset. She always keeps within its shadow, and is only seen by surprise: her smile is glorious, but all on whom it breaks go mad! Is it Arab malice, or a pre-Adamite imputation, that ascribes to the spirit of what is called the False Pyramid a woman's form?

But these are practical times, and we would fain write in a practical spirit, when not led astray by visions, that perhaps should find no place in the broad daylight of the nineteenth century. There, then, we let go our moorings on the pier of Old Cairo, some three miles distant from the city of Saladin. This wise and moderate monarch respected the faith by which he ruled the East, and never assumed the title of Sultan, since, not being of the line of Mahomet, he was disqualified from bearing the attribute which involves the union of the sacred with the temporal function of royalty.

After sailing some nine miles, we pass the village of Bedrasheen, on the right, close to which are the almost undiscoverable traces of Memphis. Yet Abdollatif, in the fourteenth century, seems to have found as vast and widely scattered ruins as those of Thebes. Thence, moving southward, we pass the Pyramids of Dashour; many nameless and crumbling edifices of the same description; the Pyramids of Saccara, one of which is built in successive terraces or stages, as is the False Pyramid,† which seems smaller the nearer you approach to it.

* Persepolis.

† It derives this epithet from being supposed to be half natural, and only a pyramidal top, added to a rocky base.

Beyond this astonishing vista of Pyramids, far to the North, behind you, are visible the Great Pyramids of Gizeh, dwarfing all others, notwithstanding their distance. The whole space that lies between these pyramids is honeycombed with graves and mummy-pits: kings, crocodiles, priests, polecats, cats, and canaille, seem indiscriminately embalmed by these poor people, who strove so zealously against corruptibility. After that of Illafoon, near Beni Souef, the traveller sees no more pyramids until he arrives at Semneh, beyond the Second Cataract, whence they occur at intervals throughout Ethiopia, until he arrives at Meroë, where, under a somewhat new form, they appear, as it were, in cities.

Further, on the Arabian side, is the town of Boash, with a Coptic convent, which is a sort of nursery for monks, who are transplanted thence to the convents of St. Anthony and St. Paul, in the Eastern desert. The first town of any importance is Beni Souef, on the western bank, eighty-three miles from Cairo. Here is an important cotton factory; and here is the starting-point for the Lesser Oasis and Fayoum. This latter district has assumed such an altered interest since the discoveries of Lipsius that its new appearances will be found in the Appendix by themselves. In it were the ancient Labyrinth, and Crocodilopolis changed by Ptolemy into Arsinoë; and, in more modern times, roses are farmed by fields;* and here Moore has laid the opening scene of his heroine's adventures in the Epicurean: who sailed to the Nile along Joseph's Canal, which opens into the Nile at Beni Souef. Here also was the retreat of the Mamelukes many years ago.

Catching sight of Illafoon, the last pyramid of this region, the traveller seldom pauses to witness the conversion of St. George into a Moslem saint (dragon and all) at Bibbeh, but stretches onward past the Stone of Welfare.

This is a rock from which the voyager is said to take his real departure for the South, as, until he reaches it, so many circumstances and news from Cairo may occur to detain him. From Abou Girgeh a road runs to Behnesa, of which there is an interesting legendary account, tracing its foundation to Joseph's son; but there is nothing sufficiently important to detain the traveller until we reach Minieh, one of the prettiest towns on the Nile, with baths and bazaars, and all the luxuries that provincial towns in Egypt afford. Then succeeds Beni Hassan, which contains some of the most curious and ancient painted tombs in the world, and near it the Speos Artemidos, or

* "One farmer has 3,000 acres of roses in cultivation."—*St. John.*

Diana's Cave. In the former, when hewn out by Osirtesen, cotemporary with Joseph, is the figure of a scribe introducing bearded strangers, shod with sandals, into the presence of a chief officer of the Pharaoh. These strangers bear gifts, and are accompanied by asses. This painting has been supposed to represent the arrival of Joseph's brethren from Canaan; and would then be the most interesting, as it is perhaps the most curious, painting in Egypt.

The villages of Beni Hassan were destroyed about twenty-five years ago by Ibrahim Pasha, being incorrigible robbers, and even now these precincts are the resort only of the antiquary or the outlaw, and sentries, with loaded musquets, are generally kept on guard while mooring here. Sheikh Abádeh, the ancient Antinoë, succeeds, built by Adrian, to commemorate the death of Antinous, who was drowned here. Reramoon, a sugar plantation and factory, succeeds; and then comes Mellawee. This is a pretty town, and offers conveniences for the purchase of boat stores, uninterfered with by any antiquities. Further on, however, are the grottoes and quarry of Zebayda: in the former is a curious figure of a sun-worshipper, on whom his deity is shining, every ray terminating in a hand.

Daroot is an insignificant spot, but marks the vicinity of Joseph's Canal. Here also the Doum, or Thebaid palm, is first observed, and the reign of crocodiles commences. Now the traveller is approaching the squally winds, engendered or fostered by Gebel Aboufaydée, and should insist on the sheets being held in hand by the sailors. I have spoken of our experience of this dreaded pass under the head of River Incidents. Here the river has deserted its ancient bed, and fallen foul of the next town of importance on our course, called Manfaloot. What the Nile has left of this place is tolerably clean and well-built, and contains an hospital and a cavalry-barracks: and the traveller would do well here to lay in a stock of turkeys for his provision in the upper part of the river. They are very fine birds, and not to be found farther south.

Henceforth the river winds considerably, occupying much time with little result, for we have nothing to pause upon until we reach Siout, which I have before described. Gow el Keber, on the eastern bank, is better sought for in books than on its site, where nothing now remains worth noticing. Indeed, by the time the traveller has reached thus far, he becomes rather fastidious in his demands on antiquity, and will probably pass on as we did to Ekhmim, contenting himself with a mere glance at the "pigeon-towers" of Raanieb, and a written account of the White Monastery.

Panopolis, or Ekhmim, requires examination from its antiquities, its history, and its legends. It was the chief seat of the magician of old time in Egypt, as Dabbe was in Nubia; it is said to have been founded by Ekhmim, the son of Misraim, the son of Cush, the son of Ham. Thence, passing by some mounds and villages, we pass to Girgeh, which derives its name from George, the patron saint of Egyptian Christians, as well as of England. It formerly contained the most opulent and charitable convent in Africa.

From Girgeh the traveller crosses the country on donkeys to Abydus, sending on his boat to Bellianeh. Abydus, now Arafat Madfoun, once ranked next to Thebes in importance, and contained the palace of Sesostris (Rameses II.); but is now only represented by some mounds of rubbish, and the remains of that palace. The latter contains some beautiful bas-reliefs, and paintings, as delicately cut, and as fresh, as if executed yesterday; and here was discovered by Mr. Bankes the important table of the kings which threw such light on Egypt's earlier history. After Belliani, some insignificant villages only occur till we reach Keneh, with the exception of Farshoot, a military station. The inhabitants in this neighbourhood are remarkable for their breeds of dogs and horses; they are descendants of the Howâri tribe of Arabs, who, for a long time, enjoyed independence and prosperity under their native Sheikhs, until conquered by Mohammed Bey. Opposite to Keneh is Dendera, which, with Thebes, Hermonthis, Esneh, and Edfou, we left unvisited until our return; and so I conclude this mere gazetteer of a chapter, to enter upon Æthiopia.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### ÆTHIOPIA AND ABYSSINIA.

"Woe to the land shadowy with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Æthiopia: that sendeth ambassadors by sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled." *—Isaiah xviii.

We had now traversed Egypt in all its length, which includes its breadth, and had left only sufficient objects of interest unexplored to occupy the pauses in our homeward way. Standing on the borders of old Cush and Æthiopia, we now looked forward to penetrating the wilds of Africa, and prepared to plunge into the interior with as fresh a hope

* The winged globe is found on all the edifices in Egypt and Æthiopia, and the vessels of bulrushes are still used in the interior of the latter.

as when we entered Egypt: we then looked forward to reaching Dongola, or Sennaar, and, if possible, to penetrate into Abyssinia.

There is something peculiarly inviting to adventure and interest in the character of Central Africa, apart from that difficulty which, in all cases, from woman to new worlds, stimulates a sanguine spirit.

The magnificence of tropical scenery, enhanced by its deep loneliness — the fierce character of its few inhabitants contrasted with the simplicity of their lives; their primitive virtues, and their furious passions; their vehement faith in religion, whether it be the distorted form of Christianity that we find them following, or the dark superstitions by which others are enslaved; the magic, the spells, the incantations, and the *fetish*.

It was not our fate to accomplish this design, as our voyage found its limit at the Second Cataract; so I shall merely glance at those regions in imagination, and endeavour to convey some idea of the little that is known concerning them; then return to our Nubian voyage, and resign my claim on the reader's patience, until we reach the more stirring and interesting land of Syria.

The name of Africa is borrowed from a Punic word, which signifies "corn," and was applied by the Romans to those northern districts, now Tripoli and Tunis, which constituted their granary. Lybia seems borrowed from *leb*, in the Hebrew language "heat," and designated the region lying between the great Syrtis and Egypt. Æthiopia appears to have been a vague term, applied to all the countries north of Assouan, within which, with the trifling exceptions of some brief military incursions, the Greek and Roman sway was limited. This wide region received its name from the colour of its inhabitants, and means "the land of the sunburnt countenances."

The capital of this vast country was Meroë, or Napata, where Candace* reigned. This last was the chief city of Lower Æthiopia, and was supposed identical with the modern Gibel el Birkel; but Mr. Hoskins places it one hundred miles lower down at old Dongolah.† This question is of comparatively little interest to the general reader; but the secluded and mysterious island of Meroë, with its magnificent Necropolis of pyramids, must interest every thought that allows itself to wander into these regions or these subjects.

The island of Meroë is formed by the junction of the river Astaboras with the Nile, about five hundred and sixty miles beyond Assouan, between the fifth and sixth cataracts. The capital of the same name is now only discoverable by its cemetery, whose pyramids far exceed those of Egypt in number and architecture, though inferior in size. Mr. Hoskins describes a vast plain crowded with these wonderful edifices, of which he counted eight different *groups*, one of them containing twenty-five, one twenty-three, and one thirteen pyramids!* Each pyramid has a portico, invariably facing towards the east; and the general finish and elaborate detail of execution bears testimony to their architects having possessed a high degree of art.

Isis, Osiris, Horus, and Thoth, figure on the sculptures in bas-relief in the porticoes, and are represented as accurately, though with inferior skill, as those of Thebes. Here then is the cradle of the arts, which, advancing through Egypt, at length stood triumphant on the Acropolis of Athens. The ancient capital to which this necropolis was attached lies in the shape of stone fragments and burnt bricks, strewn about the plain, as prostrate as Memphis.

Mention of this empire, remote as it is, recurs from time to time in the earliest records of the Scriptures; and the monuments bear their own annals, which date back to the most remote antiquity. For the latter, the reader must consult Mr. Hoskins's valuable work on Æthiopia; and, with respect to the former, I shall only allude to Shishak's expedition, assisted by the Æthiopians, against Jerusalem in 971 B.C.; † that of Lerah in 955 B.C.; ‡ that of Tirhaka § in 750 B.C.; and to the mention in Acts viii. 27 of Candace's eunuch.

This last event is of considerable importance, in a historical point of view, as it involves the practice of pilgrimage to Jerusalem in those days, the knowledge of the Scriptures in that remote country, and the study of the Greek language, which had been introduced long before into Æthiopia by an enlightened king named Ergamenes.‖

Whether any tradition of the true God lingered until later days it would be hard to say; but certain it is that Nubia universally received the Christian faith in the fourth century, and adhered to it until the twelfth. Then the climate proved too strong, or their faith too weak, and their religion too corrupt, to withstand Mahometanism: they adopted

* Acts. † Æthiopia, p. 67.

* These are sandstone. † 2 Chronicles xii. 2, 3.
‡ Chap. xiv. 1, 2, 11. § 2 Kings xviii.
‖ Up to the time of this king's reign, it had been the practice of the priesthood to hold the king's life in their hands. When they were dissatisfied with the reigning monarch, or wished for a change, they announced to him that "the Gods were tired of waiting for him;" whereupon he submissively took poison, and went to them. Ergamenes, having received this hint, retreated to the citadel, informed the priests that it was *they* who were "waited for," slew them all, and then became king indeed.

Islamism to a man, and it is now their boast that not a Christian inhabitant exists in Nubia.

Beyond this country, the slave-hunters have a theory that there dwells a race of pagans and cannibals; this, however, may be merely a pretext for the popularizing of their atrocious pursuits; and certain it is that, though the Crescent now holds sway over the lower countries the Cross resumes its power beyond, in Abyssinia. Here the faith which St. Mark preached in Alexandria was transplanted under the form of the Eutychian heresy, and, with the exception of a brief Roman Catholic interlude, it has maintained its ground ever since. In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese, having weathered the Cape of Good Hope, turned their eyes eagerly in search of an African settlement. In Abyssinia they found a people almost relapsed into a savage state, yet holding firm to the leading doctrines of the Christian faith. Their missionaries soon obtained a settlement among this simple people; and the Jesuits, knowing what a bond self-interest constitutes in the holiest alliance, and knowing besides the sympathy that the discovery of wealth would create and maintain in Portugal, occupied themselves actively in cultivating a commerce between the two countries.

Now, it is a fact, written on the forehead of History, that wherever, from the poles to the tropics, the Church of Rome has carried her spiritual arms, attempts to create a temporal power have accompanied them, and Abyssinia formed no exception to the rule. A Latin patriarch was soon discovered by the emperor to be the leading authority in his kingdom; the Monophysite faith, which had languished hitherto, revived under the genial breath of persecution; and an Abuna, or indigenous patriarch, espoused the cause of his church and his country. This spiritual chief was slain in the civil war which followed, but was immediately replaced; and, after five rebellions, the apostate emperor gave liberty of conscience to his people, which was fatal to the Romish Church. At his death, his son Basilides restored the ancient faith and discipline, and the Monophysite churches resounded with a song of triumph, "that the sheep of Abyssinia were now delivered from the hyænas of the West."

They seem to have profited little, however, in a spiritual point of view, by this deliverance. The light of Christianity glimmers very faintly at present through the gloom of superstitions which have the shadows of African idolatry added to their own. St. Michael is appealed to as an intercessor, and the Virgin Mary is deified, almost to the exclusion of the Son. Confession is insisted on as indispensable to eternal life, and those who die unshrived are refused burial. The fee for confession is eight pieces of salt, which may throw some light on this portion of the doctrine. Kissing the hand of a priest purifies from sin, and a pilgrimage to Jerusalem insures paradise to the pilgrim. The king of Thou, Sehela Selassé, regards himself as the lineal descendant of Solomon by the Queen of Sheba; he calls himself "King of Israel," and bears upon his banners the inscription, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed." The Abyssinians observe the Jewish sabbath, circumcision, and many other rites of that people, whose cause they deem themselves destined to espouse, and believe that they shall one day rise, en masse, to deliver Palestine from the Infidel.

The Egyptians, proud of these converts of their faith (whose patriarch, or rather metropolitan, they appoint), used to exaggerate the power and resources of Abyssinia and its emperor; asserting that he could bring 100,000 men into the field, that he could withhold and give forth the waters of the Nile, and that he possessed unbounded command of gold. Modern discoveries, however, and Major Harris's recent visit, reveal to us a people as savage, in almost every respect, as the nations that surround them.

There appears to be a wild caprice among the institutions, if such they may be called, of all these tropical nations. In a neighbouring state to that of Abyssinia, the king, when appointed to the regal dignity, retires into an island, and is never again visible to the eyes of men but once—when his ministers come to strangle him; for it may not be that the proud monarch of Behr should die a natural death. No men, with this fatal exception, are ever allowed even to set foot upon the island, which is guarded by a band of Amazons.

In another border country, called Habeesh, the monarch is dignified with the title of Tiger. He was formerly Melek of Shendy, when it was invaded by Ismael Pasha, and was even then designated by this fierce cognomen. Ismael, Mehemet Ali's second son, advanced through Nubia, claiming tribute and submission from all the tribes. Nemmir (which signifies Tiger), the King of Shendy, received him hospitably, as Mahmoud, our dragoman, informed us, and, when he was seated in his tent, waited on him to learn his pleasure. "My pleasure is," replied the invader, "that you forthwith furnish me with slaves, cattle, and money, to the value of 100,000 dollars."—"Pooh!" said Nemmir, "you jest; all my country could not produce what you require in one hundred moons:" — "Ha! Wallah!" was the young Pasha's reply, and he struck the Tiger across the face with his pipe. If he

had done so to his namesake of the jungle, the insult could not have roused fiercer feelings of revenge, but the human animal did not show his wrath at once. "It is well," he replied; "let the Pasha rest: *to-morrow he shall have nothing more to ask.*" The Egyptian, and the few Mameluke officers of his staff, were tranquilly smoking towards evening, entertained by some dancing-girls whom the Tiger had sent to amuse them; when they observed that a huge pile of dried stalks of Indian corn was rising rapidly round the tent. "What means this?" inquired Ismael angrily; "am not I Pasha?" — "It is but forage for your highness's horses," replied the Nubian, "for, were your troops once arrived, the people would fear to approach the camp." Suddenly, the space is filled with smoke, the tent-curtains shrivel up in flames, and the Pasha and his comrades find themselves encircled in what they well know is their funeral pyre. Vainly the invader implores mercy, and assures the Tiger of his warm regard for him and all his family; vainly he endeavours to break through the fiery fence that girds him round; a thousand spears bore him back into the flames, and the Tiger's triumphant yell and bitter mockery mingled with his dying screams.

The Egyptians perished to a man. Nemmir escaped up the country crowned with savage glory, and married the daughter of a king, who soon left him his successor, and the Tiger still defies the old Pasha's power. The latter, however, took a terrible revenge upon his people: he burnt all the inhabitants of the village nearest to the scene of his son's slaughter, and cut off the right hands of five hundred men besides. So much for African warfare.

I shall only add one more Ethiopian anecdote, of a different species of romance, and then return to my task.

About a hundred years ago, there lived a shepherd youth of great beauty and endowments; but, as he seemed condemned to pine in an obscure and lonely life, the courage, wit, and ambition that burnt within him, were wasted on the sheep and goats. A wise old woman, in his childhood, had foretold that he should one day become great, and, supported by that hope, he had lived on until he had almost learnt to do without it. One day he was sitting on the bank of a lonely lake among the mountains, and gazing on the still waters, that might have reminded him of the Eastern apologue: "It is only the calm waters that reflect heaven in their breast;" when he observed an eddy near him, whereby the lake seemed struggling to escape. He cast in his staff, which instantly disappeared; and then, impelled by some instinct, he heaved a huge mass of rock into the troubled waters, which thereupon grew calm. Shortly afterwards, the lake began to rise, and at length overflowed into a desert ravine. The shepherd returned to his tent, musing on what he felt was an event of important omen; but time wore on, and he was still a shepherd. Then there came among his people ambassadors from a far country down in the plains, saying, "The waters of our valley are dried up, and the king will give his daughter and half his kingdom to him who will restore them; for a staff has been found in the dried watercourse, and it is such, they say, as the men of these mountains use." Then went the young shepherd to the king, restored his river, and obtained his daughter and his throne in return. Such is even the legendary value of water in these "lands of the sun."

The trade from Abyssinia down the Nile is very trifling; the principal exports are indigo, ivory, hides, and slaves.

The Pasha has garrisons at Shendy, Dongola, Sennaar, and Khartoum, in Nubia. The latter owes its creation to his army. It is modern, of course, well built, and beautifully situated at the confluence of the Blue and White Rivers. A Greek merchant, who had been physician to the forces there, told me the Blue River was by far the most rapid, and also contained the sweetest water; which renders it probable that it retains purity and momentum from a mountain descent, that the White River is unconscious of.

Besides Meröe, there are magnificent ruins, and some pyramids at El Birkel, Solib, and Semneh, within twenty days' journey from Assouan.

After these slight prospective and retrospective digressions, I return to my tour.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE CATARACT AND PHILÆ.

Syene's rocks are far behind,
And thy green banks, sweet Isle of Flowers;
And thine, Shehayl! whose children's laugh
Rings merrily through the date-tree bowers,
That erst, mysterious rites concealing,
O'ershadowed silent Pharaoh's kneeling.
LORD LINDSAY.

AT Assouan we gave a feast and a day of rest to our crew, after their twenty-six days' labour, almost without intermission. Their banquet consisted of a ram, as usual, which appeared to have been domesticated by its late owner; for it rubbed its old horny head affectionately against the knees of its butcher, as he turned its forehead towards Mecca, and pronounced the name of Allah whilst he

used his knife. The poor brute was skinned in less time than a lady would take off her glove, cut up like a young chicken, plunged into water that was boiling on acacia branches, and had disappeared utterly in almost as short a time as it takes to tell it. Then its devourers betook themselves to their interminable music, to the tune of which they exhibited dances that were anything but edifying. The villagers sat round them in a ring, a self-constituted audience; while their naked little children ran about playing hide and seek behind them, with as much concealment as was practicable where drapery did not abound.

The Isle of Flowers, opposite, is inhabited by Nubians; three hundred yards of water separate two people utterly dissimilar in language, character, and feature. Here, is the thieving, cowardly, cunning Egyptian; there, the honest, bold, simple Nubian; each despising and pitying the other—such is patriotism.

What a problem does this tendency to identify ourselves with the land that gave us birth afford! This "fortunate fallacy," as a distinguished political economist designates it, which, running through the long predicamental line of family, tribe, country, province, nation, is binding among men who would disregard the happiness of any individual composing it. Whatever philosophers may say, however, it belongs to the best instincts of fallen humanity, and, like filial affection, is found as influential among these poor tyrant-ridden savages as among the snowy wastes of the Esquimaux, or the Senate of Great Britain.

One of our crew was a very intelligent, good-tempered boy, about sixteen years of age, who seemed to consider the prospect of an adventure the most irresistible temptation, and was as proud of any little article of dress as a woman-child. R. proposed to take him to Syria as his pipe-bearer, and told him he should have a horse, and silk sash, and pistols. The boy's eyes glistened as he heard these glories recapitulated; then, suddenly, his countenance fell, and with tears he replied, "Very good, very grand; but I cannot leave my mother." And so he went back to his hard life and squalid dress, and meagre food, with which he is at this moment happier probably than if dragoman to a prince, and—motherless.

The crew had sunk to sleep, R. had retired to the boat, the villagers had disappeared among the palms, and I sat at the door of my tent in solitude, looking out upon the sands that shone silver-white in contrast with the dark cliffs and masses of granite that surrounded me. The roar of the distant cataract was continuous, and now and then a peal of laughter, or a snatch of song, broke from the village beyond the palms, and the jackal's wailing cry answered from the cemetery in the desert.

I had just fallen asleep on my capote, when I heard an eager sniffing at my ear, and felt a warm breath upon my cheek, which, even in my dreams, I knew came from no kindly watcher of my slumbers. As I slowly opened my eyes, I encountered such a sight as almost made me close them again, against what seemed a hideous vision. Between me and the moonlight stood the gaunt, hog-backed form of a hyæna, all bristling with excitement; and, within arm's length, his large, round, ghastly eyes were glaring upon mine. Instinctively I levelled my pistol at his fiendish countenance; but, just as my finger trembled on the trigger, I saw the boat was in the line, and, crowded as she was, though distant, the shot must have taken effect upon some sailor. So I scared the brute with a shout, and, when I ran to the door, he had disappeared behind the rocks. The blood of the slaughtered ram was still steaming from the sands, and I supposed had attracted my unexpected visitor. This time I fastened the door of the tent, and slept as soundly as if I were not in the midst of a menagerie let loose. And here I may allude to the fact, that it requires some practice to find a lullaby in the serenades of jackals, hyænas, or even of wild dogs; to lie trustfully on sands that harbour scorpions, stinging beetles, and horned asps; and to be soothed with the murmurs of a stream in which the crocodile wanders, and the water-serpent wriggles.

There! flames forth the sunshine of the Tropics, flashing over the roseate granite cliffs, and the dew-diamonded palms, and the silvery river; the very desert smiles beneath that magical morning power; and all who have survived the night come forth rejoicing, from hovel and from palace, as if life were indeed a blessing, as well as a probation. The indefatigable Mahmoud has already unloaded the boat, preparatory to the ascent of the cataract; and by his provident arrangement a file of camels is moving down the narrow pathway, to transport the cargo to Philœ, across the desert. Now the tent disappears, and leaves as little trace as the palaces that once occupied its site. Trunks, boxes, hencoops, frying-pans, powder-magazines, and tables are piled upon the kneeling camels. They growl a little to express their savage but servile feelings, which pass for meekness and resignation in the eyes of the world, owing to their hypocritically resigned expression of countenance. Now, the black driver gives an angry shriek at them, which means, "Get up, you brute;" and there they go, majes-

tically towering along, as if they were doing it all for show; while cocks are crowing on the top of them from the hencoops and Abdallah is grinning his teeth out as he bestrides my saddle, which surmount a pile of kettles and coffee-pots.

The Rais of the Cataract and the other river authorities did not make their appearance till towards noon. It seems that a report had reached the Pasha's ears that the poor people, who dwell among these rocks, had discovered some means to avert starvation by catching fish in weirs of the rudest kind, built among the rapids. Mehemet Ali, by return of post (which, fortunately for the fishermen, occupied six weeks), transmitted an order to tax these little fisheries; and the river-chiefs were at this moment occupied in an interview with the tax-gatherer.

At length they arrived; three tall, spare, elderly men, with long beards and large turbans, and such cumbrous drapery that exertion seemed impossible to them. They came on board, squatted around us on the deck, and were immediately followed by crowds of their acquaintance, who listened to the whole bargain, and did not scruple to express their sentiment of satisfaction, or otherwise, on anything that was said. The bargaining was carried on with vehement voices, amounting, at important passages, to screams and the most violent gesticulation, which appeared to be as natural to them as an English horse-dealer's sticking his thumb in his button-hole, without which process I never saw a horse purchased in Christendom. We, of course, held our peace; and Mahmoud and the chiefs, after an hour's debate, came to an agreement on a price, which each was perfectly well aware of from the beginning. This amounted to the imposing sum of £2 10s., in consideration of which we and our ship were to be dragged up the cataracts, and let safely down them on our return.

The wind was fair and strong. A new pilot, whom we were obliged to engage for the upper river, here took the place of our faithful Bacheet, as good a man in his way, black or Briton, as ever held a tiller. Our recruit called himself "The Hippopotamus," and a more grim, forbidding-looking negro I never beheld. His face was deeply marked with the smallpox, and frightfully seamed, moreover, with the explosion of gunpowder; he was about six feet and a half high, and his lean black limbs looked like those of a skeleton in mourning. Now, the moorings are loosed, the sails spread to the northern breeze, Egypt recedes, and we glide into Æthiopia!

Colossal masses of granite, detached from the dark red cliffs that tower over us, lie strewn along the banks, and in the river. On our right, Elephantina nods all its palm-trees in farewell; on the left, the deserted city, with its rugged ruins topping the jagged cliffs, till the distance blended into one the vast distorted masses that lay darkly relieved against the pale blue glowing sky.

Our voyage for the next hour was very exciting and picturesque; the river, narrowed between the dark crags, here and there boiled into milk-white foam: sometimes a pyramid of nature-piled rocks towered from the desert plain; and between it and the barren hills would for a moment smile some spot of vivid verdure, shadowed by acacias, or a palm-tree; sometimes the sandy valleys were of deep yellow, contrasted with the gloomy rocks, whose shadow they received like water; sometimes these sandy tracts were silvery white, giving the impression of a snowy tract by moonlight. Then we shot past the beautiful little island of Shehayl, and entered upon more troubled waters.

The breeze was fair and fresh, and our bark breasted the torrent gallantly, flinging the foam from her bows on the black rocks as she struggled past. At the foot of the second rapid there was a space of calm water, over which she rushed, as if to charge the fall, but it was too strong for her: for a moment she recoiled, then fairly went about, and seemed driving furiously and inevitably against an impending cliff, at whose base the waters weltered fearfully. One of the chiefs of the cataract had, until now, been seated tranquilly on the deck, but watching with a vivid eye every motion of the admirably-steered boat. Now came *his* time. In a moment more we should have been a wreck against that rugged rock, when suddenly he started to his feet; his cumbrous-looking drapery fell from around him like a veil. One instant, an infirm old man seemed cowering at our feet; the next, a stalwart, sinewy form rose like magic from his place. One moment he stood motionless at the bow, then plunged fearlessly into the torrent, emerged upon the threatening rock, and received upon his naked shoulder a blow that might have felled a palm-tree; the very boat reeled from her collision with that iron man, who turned her aside with dexterous strength, and then she floated round into a quiet bay, and was at rest. The hero of a moment ago again looked like a bale of blue and white cotton lumbering the deck, except that he resumed his pipe, which had not been extinguished, so sudden was the whole transaction.

This was our first day's work. Leaving our boat at the foot of the cataracts, we proceeded over land to Philœ, where our encampment awaited us. It was only about two miles distant, yet never in my life have

I seen scenery so wild and strange and unreal as that through which we passed. The general effect was one of awful grandeur and sternest solitude; yet, among those menacing cliffs that towered over and around us in the most distorted forms, lay spots of the softest beauty and richest verdure. These increased as we proceeded; and we entered a village of pretty cottages, overshadowed by palm-trees, that gave us the most agreeable surprise. They were as different from the squalid dwellings of Egypt as were their modest, yet unveiled women, from those of the Fellaheen.

Old women were sitting in the shade, occupied with some quiet labour; girls were employed amongst the enclosures; little children ran about us, with merry faces and laughing voices, begging us to buy their pebbles, or flowers, or bright green locusts. Some of the attitudes into which these little urchins threw themselves were very amusing: the boys, with one little foot advanced, and one hand upon the hip, looked about them haughtily and erect; the girls, with a timid air that struggled with their merry eyes, wore an appearance of unconscious modesty which veiled their nakedness better than all the silks of Hindostan.

Then we came to Birbé, a sort of river-port for the Upper Nile, and, passing through a gorge in the rocky mountain, came suddenly and unexpectedly in view of PHILŒ! the most unearthly, strange, wild, beautiful spot I ever beheld. No dreamer of the mystical old times, when beauty, knowledge, and power were realized on earth, ever pictured to himself a scene of wilder grandeur and more perfect loveliness. All that I had read, or heard, or imagined of this wondrous scene, had left me unprepared for such a realization; and, if I add my own vain efforts at description to those that have preceded me, it is not in any hope of conveying a true impression to the reader. All round us towered up vast masses of gloomy rocks, piled one upon the other in the wildest confusion; some of them, as it were, skeletons of pyramids, others requiring only a few strokes of giant labour to form colossal statues that might have startled the Anakim. Here spreads a deep drift of silvery sand, fringed by rich verdure and purple blossoms; there a grove of palms, intermingled with the flowering acacia; and then, through vistas of craggy cliffs and plumy foliage, gleams a calm blue lake, with the Sacred Island in the midst, green to the water's edge, except where the walls of the old temple-city are reflected. Above those shrub-tangled and pillared banks were tall pyramids; columns airy, yet massive in their proportion; palms, and towers, and terraces. Beyond the island, the lake glimmers through the ruins, and the whole scene of peace and beauty is embosomed in a valley frowned over by a girdle of rugged mountains, all scathed, and dark, and desolate.

There was an air of repose and awe, and perfect calm over the whole region round, that suited well with the solemn purposes to which it was once consecrated; and I found myself asseverating its unrivalled beauty with the most solemn oath of ancient times, "by Him who sleeps in Philœ;" as if it were a solemn invocation now.

Our tent had been pitched upon the shores of the lake; the fire was blazing, the carpets were spread, and in a few minutes we were seated as tranquilly "at gaze" on the mystic island, as if we had been at home; which, to do us justice, we felt ourselves to be pretty much, in most places.

I wandered along the river for hours, by the light of a glorious moon, that shone as brightly over that island as when a thousand worshippers thronged those fanes to keep her festival: and then we read Isaiah's denunciations; and Ezekiel's prophecies found a voice, as they did a realization, among the desolations they had foretold.

We had been in active exertion since daylight, and it was past midnight when we lay down to rest; and so profound was the repose of the party, that, although our servants slept close to the tent, and R.'s pallet was within a few feet of mine, none of them heard two shots which I fired at the wild dogs that came prowling into the tent.

The early part of the night was quite illuminated by the comet, which spread its light from the zenith to the spot where the sun had set, as if it was composed of some stray rays of light which he had forgotten, and left behind him.

Sunrise, the next morning, found us tramping through the heavy sands, to return to our boat, which we had left below the Cataract. The strangely tossed rocks bore some faint resemblance to those of Glengariff, in Ireland, but were all the colour of dried blood. Even at this early hour, the sun was intensely hot, and the rocks scorched our soles through thick shoes, yet little children were running about upon them with bare feet.

We had time to smoke our pipes on board, and refresh ourselves with coffee, before the Rais of the Cataract made his appearance, accompanied by about fifty followers, all naked but for a napkin round their waists; fine, athletic, intelligent-looking fellows they were, though as dark as midnight, except where their white cinctures and turbans relieved the gloom and made them look like magpies at a distance. They all carried

heavy clubs, however, which appeared to us an unnecessary part of their equipment; besides the knife, which every Nubian wears in a sheath strapped round his left arm, for want of a girdle, or any article of dress to stick it in.

An animated and angry discussion immediately ensued between the leaders and Mahmoud, while the rest looked calmly on, leaning on their clubs; now gazing pensively at the strange boat, now glancing inquiringly towards a gorge in the opposite end of the valley from that by which we had arrived. The cause of all this soon appeared. The Sheikh of a rival village arrived, attended by numerous followers also armed with clubs, and a stormy debate began between the contending parties, as to who was to have the dragging of us up the cataract.

Matters began to look serious; the women and children disappeared, reinforcements continued to pour in to both parties, and the controversy waxed fiercer than ever. At length, Mahmoud, who had been gesticulating and shouting more than any of them, swore in a solemn voice, by the Prophet's beard, that he would go to the governor, and left the boat apparently for the purpose. Now this governor was a decrepid old Turk, who might perhaps have half a company of half-starved Egyptian conscripts for his garrison; but, at the sound of his awful name, there was suddenly a great calm among that stormy crowd, consisting of some two or three hundred athletic savages. "By Allah, no!" was heard from a dozen voices, and suddenly the black rocks and the white sands seemed to swallow our piebald invaders. It appeared that these poor people were almost starved, the Pasha having wrung their last para, and almost their last date from them, and they had come to endeavour to obtain some of our purchase-money. This money, divided among the hundred who were to be thus employed, would leave only about threepence for each man for each day's labour, even if the chiefs did not appropriate the lion's portion; and for this pittance they strove as for an independence.

We now made sail to the northerly breeze, which fortunately is almost always blowing, conveying to the burning tropics that coolness which our part of the world can so well spare. We had smooth water for some time, and our deck was crowded with our new subsidiaries, while the three chiefs sat close to our divan, and one of them in particular was shouting like the chorus of a brass band. I requested he would keep silence, and, in my ignorance of Arabic, applied to him a term which meant something like "Hold your jaw." He *was* silent, as if thunderstruck; then looked at me for a moment fixedly, and pointed to his grey beard. I did not then know how I had affronted him, but I felt I *had* done so, and I also felt the force of his appeal. I made a gesticulation of respect, and used some expression of apology, which he accepted with rather a lofty air, and said it was "taib" (very well).

In such interchange of civilities we arrived at the first rush of water that is called a cataract, and made fast to the rocks, while preparations for the ascent were in progress. A boat belonging to the Pasha was here before us; and as we had no Firman we were obliged to give it precedence. The scene now was very striking: enormous masses of dark rocks were hanging over, or lying around us, in every direction; the foaming river roared and writhed through every fissure and ravine; innumerable dark, demonlike figures, like those in the Der Freischutz, flitted about us in every direction, among the rocks, upon the sands, upon the very deck; now they plunge into the water, or shoot across the rapids on a log of wood; now a dozen woolly heads start up under our stern, shouting for "backsheesh." Perfectly naked and amphibious, they seemed to have as little choice of element as so many seals; and, what with their shouting, and their splashing, and their ubiquity, and vanishing, added to the thunders of the cataract, which the echoes multiplied, and the bewilderment of the strange scene, and all its savages, it became almost impossible to resist joining in the universal devilment (as we should call it in Ireland) that seemed going on all round.

At length we proceeded to business. The chiefs had now ascended the rocks, and stood, with their long blue and white robes floating in the wind, giving directions to the eager and fluctuating crowd that swarmed round, and above, and below them. Some Egyptian officers meanwhile were perched upon a point of rock, with their sabres crossed over their knees, and their pipes in their mouths, apparently the only animate or inanimate things exempt from the universal commotion and confusion. Now an English rope was made fast to the mainmast; and about a hundred Nubians, some on the rocks, some in the stream, taking hold, we were dragged up the hill of water that foamed fiercely round our boat, and deluged her with its spray. "Yallough! Wallah!" we are on the very ridge where the waters seem heaped up ere they plunge below, and our boat trembles like a pennon in the wind. "Yallough! Wallah!" once more, and we are over it. After a short rest, we moved on over a quiet space of water to the third and greatest fall, where the whole body of the Nile precipitates itself from between two

towering cliffs, foaming and plashing, and, in short, cataracting very respectably. Here Ibrahim Pasha's boat was lost, and his Rais and two slaves were drowned, one of them in saving his master. Here Lord Lindsay's boat was wrecked, and Dr. Clarke's met with the same fate. Mahmoud strongly urged the expediency of our leaving the boat while she performed the ascent, but we told him, in reply, to light our pipes, and he was too chivalrous to leave us alone; so he remained, and, with the pilot, was our only companion. No doubt it was more amusing to be in the actual struggle; but it must have been much more picturesque to see it from the rocks, as the whole population of the country round clung to the long rope, and laid themselves out upon the rocks awaiting the signal to start.

Now every arm is nerved, and every eye is riveted on the Rais of the cataracts, who stands on a pinnacle of the rock, waving his staff like the wand of an Enchanter who had invoked all that unearthly-looking crew to his assistance. He waited a little while for the wind, which now came rustling up the river and swayed his white beard and floating robes as it filled our straining sails. Then, over the roar of the torrent, and the shouting of a thousand men, his voice was heard. "Yallough!" he cried, and made a gesture as if he was going to do it all himself. That cry was answered by the dark crowd in a chorus of "Haylee sah" * as they laid their brawny shoulders to the rope, and made a rush forward. In we plunged, half buried in the cataract, but soon felt ourselves slowly ascending its steep, though every sight and sound was overwhelmed by the rush of waters, that foamed, and sparkled over, and thundered round us. Some few minutes of convulsive struggle and intense suspense, and there! we are past the dreaded cataract, and floating calmly over the river, which is now uninterrupted for two hundred miles.

We paused a little while to take in our crew, and get out the Nile from our boat; and then with swelling sails we glided through a portal, as it were, of gloomy rocks that shuts in Æthiopia from the world. When we emerged from its shadows, the lovely lake and temple-crowned island of Philœ opened on our view. We anchored under a grove of palm-trees close to our encampment, and, leaving the servants and the crew to replace the cargo, we embarked in a sort of wooden tray for the island. Our guide and ferryman was Abou Zeb, a very handsome and intelligent lad of about sixteen, who is called the king of Philœ. This title is accompanied with no idea of derision, but bestowed by the simple people round with as much regard for his prerogative as if it were backed by the power of the Pharaohs. We were glad to find that his sable Majesty had no residence, nor permitted any, on the Sacred Island; though, soon after we landed, some girls swam over with coins, and beads, and other little commodities for sale. As they emerged from the lake, like so many Neuhas, they merely wrung the water from their long black hair; the sun, and their soft, smooth skins soon evaporating the drops that lingered on their undulating forms. These girls wore no dress, except a narrow girdle of tasselled leather round their loins, and one or two had a slight veil which hung from her head over the shoulders; this she wreathed into a most becoming turban before plunging into the water. Notwithstanding the simplicity, to say the least of it, of this attire, these Nubian maidens wore a natural and graceful modesty that invested it only with associations of primitive purity and Eve-like innocence.

We landed at a small door, a sort of sally-port, and, ascending a dark and narrow staircase, found ourselves in front of a gigantic pyramidal portal covered with hieroglyphics of colossal dimensions. This opened into a magnificent court of the Great Temple, on each side of which was ranged a noble façade of lofty columns, nearly perfect. The capitals of each were of a different pattern, but all beautifully worked; and when the varied and vivid painting (with which each stony boss and blossom of the chapiters, as well as each column's shaft, was once enriched) was entire, the effect of the whole must have been very gorgeous, however irreconcilable to our present taste. We passed from this court into a lesser one, whose lofty walls seemed to narrow upward towards the sky. This gloom, contrasted with the intense sunshine from which we passed, produced a striking effect as we found ourselves surrounded by gigantic sculptures, whose mystic forms we could scarcely trace; thence into an adytum, covered with a ponderous roof, supported by enormous columns, encrusted with hieroglyphics. On some of these the painting was very vivid. It would be vain to attempt to convey any impression by mere words of this wondrous labyrinth through which we wandered; from darkened tombs to lofty terraces, from haunted chambers to wide courts, where Belshazzar and all his nobles might have feasted. Everywhere we found new objects of interest, and each spot that we explored seemed to be the marvel of the whole. Imagine walls, whose height it wearies the eye to measure, all covered with gigantic hieroglyphics, where gods and warriors seem to move self-supported between

* God help.

earth and sky; then groves of columns, whose girth and height would rival those of the most corpulent old oak trees, with capitals as luxurious as a cauliflower, and gleaming with bright enamel of every hue in heaven. Every pillar and every wall are so thickly covered with hieroglyphics that they resemble a petrified tapestry.

And then, from the terraces that extend over this assemblage of temples, what a view presents itself! Beneath, lies that verdant and flowery islet, strewn with marble wrought into every beautiful form known to ancient art; over that pile of prostrate pillars, a grove of palms is waving; from between the columns of yon small temple the acacia's foliage seems to gush, and its blossoms stream. Round all the island, flows the clear, bright river; and, opposite, lies the old Temple of Osiris, now called the Bed of Pharaoh.

Beyond the river are patches of cultivation intermingled with drifts of desert sands, palms, rocks, villages, and wastes; and, over all, darkly encircling this paradise, rises the chain of the Hemaceuta, or Golden Mountains. Apart from the Great Temple (or accumulation of temples, as it seems to be), there is a very beautiful lesser one, nearly perfect. Its dedication is uncertain, but places like these acquire little interest from the names of the deities who were worshipped within their walls. The island at large was consecrated to the great triad, Osiris, Isis, and Horus; but it is somewhat disappointing to find that none of these edifices were erected until the comparative yesterday of two thousand years ago.

The whole island is not, perhaps, above fifty acres in extent, but it is richer far in objects of interest than any spot of similar extent in the world. Here the student might live for years, finding each day reveal some new source of knowledge, and the antiquities of the island inexhaustible until he became one himself.

There are numbers of travellers' names, from Burckhardt and Belzoni down, mingling their hieroglyphics with those of the gods and kings of the elder world. For my own part, I do not look upon these records as the desecration that most writers seem to consider them; I felt a lively pleasure in recognizing the handwriting of several friends in this remote and lonely spot, and even in renewing the fading letters of their names. Who is so unfortunate in his friends and friendships that their names will not recall multiplied and pleasant associations which it does not require the depths of Africa to intensify!

There was one case, however, of autographism, which amused me not a little. Mr. Stephens, the American traveller, whose appreciation of the perfections of his own country is considerably at issue with that of any others, gives us an account of having carved his name on the same slab that bore the inscription written there by Dessaix, in 1799, to commemorate his arrival with a French army in pursuit of the Mamelukes. Now, after Mr. Stephens, came a French traveller, who thought it bad taste, even in an American, to obtrude his identity into the company of the French general, the rather, perhaps, as there were some acres of "spare" wall equally available for the purpose. This last enthusiast has carefully eradicated the name of Stephens, and appended, moreover, the following aphorism—"La page d'histoire ne doit pas être salie."

The evening breeze found us ready to start with its first breath for Wady Halfa.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### NUBIA.

Where rippling wave, and dashing oar,
That midnight chant attend;
Or whispering palm-leaves, from the shore
With midnight silence blend.

KEBLE.

Light was her form, and darkly delicate
That brow, whereon her native sun had set,
But had not marred.

TOM CRINGLE'S LOG.

As our boat shot away from beautiful Philœ, the dark precipitous cliffs closed gradually round us, and the Sacred Island remained but as a vision. If the days of hermitage were ever to return, the solitary could find no place on earth like this, wherein to cultivate self-discipline, to study uninterruptedly, and, whilst preparing for his translation to another world, to communicate his own high hope of immortality to the gentle and intelligent savages that surrounded him.

Nubia differs very widely, in the character of its scenery, from the land we have just left. It is true, we had still the palm, the river, and the desert, like those we left behind us, but there are no more forests; the cliffs, dark red, assume wilder forms and approach nearer to the river; the stream itself is narrower and more rapid, the line of vegetation is more limited but brighter, and the desert appears more frequently. The inhabitants, also, exhibit a striking change, becoming more savage as their scenery becomes wilder, and darker in complexion, as the sun increases in intensity. They are a very mixed race, even between the Cataracts, and the people bordering on Egypt

speak one dialect called *Kenooz*, while those above Kalabshé speak another called *Kenzee*. There are, moreover, several distinct tribes, such as the Ababdé, the Moggrebyns, and the Bisharein, who have each their settlements, and their own peculiar customs.

Generally speaking, the men have laid aside the turban, and rely upon the covering which nature has supplied, in the shape of profuse and thickly-matted hair, which falls down on either side of the face, and is plentifully impregnated with castor-oil. Few of the young men wear any covering but a napkin round their loins, and none of the virgins have any garments except the leather girdle I have before alluded to, and a blue or white scarf which hangs down from the back of their heads. The matrons wear a single garment, consisting of a long and very loose blue robe; and the old men use turbans, and voluminous white cotton robes like those of Egypt.

Every man we meet with now carries a long spear ornamented with the skin of serpents or crocodiles, or a heavy club of ebony, which is brought from the interior by the slave-dealers. Many of them also carry a circular shield of hippopotamus' hide, with a boss in the centre, forming a hollow for the hand, which grasps an iron bar.

Great numbers of Nubians, oppressed by hard labour and heavy taxes, leave their country to seek subsistence as servants at Cairo, where they are in great request from their character for honesty and courage. In this particular they resemble the Swiss in Paris, and, like them, only strive to amass wealth in the hope of enjoying it in their own country in the evening of their lives.

The Egyptians call their language, or languages, Barabra, and themselves Berberi; and this is probably a modification of the term Barbari, which the Greeks and Romans applied to all foreigners indiscriminately. As a nation, they appear industrious, simple, and much given to war, at least in the shape of intestine feuds. Their principal vice appears to be drunkenness, but I must say that I have this only from hearsay, as I never saw an instance of intoxication except in our Nubian pilot, who deeply expiated his offence. Their dram is distilled from rice, and called *Raki;* but they have also a very tempting liquor called *Boozy*, distilled from barley.

The Nubian woman is more free than her Egyptian neighbour, and also far more virtuous; she seldom wears a veil, and, as she bends over the river to fill her water-jar, or walks away, supporting it with one hand, no statuary could imagine a more graceful picture than she presents. Her light and elegant figure has that serpent sinuousness when she moves, that constitutes the very poetry of motion, and resembles gliding rather than walking. Her face is finely oval, and her dark eyes have a gentle and inquiring though somewhat sad expression that seems to bespeak great intelligence. Her complexion is very dark, but it is of that bronze colour so familiar to our eyes in statues that it forms no detraction from the general beauty of this graceful and winning savage.

There was a girl at Philœ, who, I think, approached more nearly the *ideal* of perfect loveliness than any other I have ever seen; and might have passed for the very spirit of that wild and beautiful region. Whether she lay couched under the shade of the palms, weaving the cotton whose pale yellow flowers were strewn around her, or led her sheep to pasture, or smiled upon the children at their play, or gazed upon the strangers with her large, lustrous, gentle eyes, in every phase of her simple life, she was what Eve might have been.

The voices of these women are very sweet, and low, and plaintive; and though their language conveyed to my ear as little meaning as the song of birds, yet there was something in its *tones* that seemed familiar. Often, when our boat lay moored under the shadow of the palm, have I lain and listened to the murmur of their voices, with a pleasure such as the richest notes of the Italian music never thrilled me with. There is nothing so associative as sound: there are tones which our heart in its youth has heard, that never leave it; that lie hushed from the wild tumult of the world we live in, until some sister-sound bids it start to life, and with it recalls not only the time, but the feelings we enjoyed or suffered, when first we heard its music. Under such a spell, the wild and savage scenery of Africa passed from my eyes; far distant climes and times replaced it on Memory's mirage, and came thronging by as rapidly as those hours had fleeted, when I was roused from my reverie by Mahmoud's informing me, with an execration, that these "maladette donne" wanted three piastres a piece for their "maladetti pollastri."

Numerous as are the attractions of these dark charmers, there is one very powerful protection to the traveller against their unconscious fascinations;—that soft, smooth, shining skin owes all its brilliance to—castor oil! Unfortunately for romance, there are large plantations of this pretty plant in every district in Nubia; and, as oil is absolutely necessary to save the naked skin from the scorching effects of a tropical sun, the whole population, men, women, and children, polish themselves with it two or three times a

day! Now, does it not seem hard, that in a country where the trees drop aromatic gums and fragrant balsams, and every air is laden with delicate perfume, that the particular article of general use in the savage toilette should be such as only an apothecary's apprentice could make love in the face of?

Whilst recording these important and interesting facts and fancies, we are driving against the current at the rate of four or five miles an hour, with an indolent and luxurious sense of motion that is the principal charm of our river navigation in this delicious climate. But, as the sun goes down behind the desert mountains, the breeze falls too, and we are fain to anchor under a high bank till morning; and, wearied as we are with cataracts, and temples, and desert pedestrianism, we gladly prepare to rest. But, hark! as the moon rises over yon grove of palms, the sounds of song mingle with the faint rustle of their foliage. As yet we had seen no genuine Nubians in their savage state, and there was something peculiarly attractive in this mysterious music, issuing from invisible lips in a land all strange to us. "C'è un *ballo!*" exclaimed Mahmoud, starting from his carpet where he had just composed himself to rest. "E un *gran* ballo!" repeated he, as he placed his hand to his ear to listen more attentively. "Andiamo, Signori," he continued, with an expression that seemed to say the expedition was inevitable; "Andiamo," echoed we, as we stuck pistols in our girdles, and flung our jackets over our shoulders.

And now behold us threading our way through a dark forest, attended by a volunteer escort of four of our crew armed with clubs; but we were on our way to a ball, and it was St. Patrick's night moreover, and I was not a little anxious to compare the mode of its celebration here, with the splendid scene which I had witnessed a twelvemonth before at the Viceregal Court in Ireland.

As we steered our way through the wood by the sound of the yet distant music, I inquired of Mahmoud if we should find our unconscious entertainers dancing. "Oh, yes." "What, the women dancing with the men?" "Corpo di Baccho! No; these women are all highly respectable." "How do you know? you have never mixed in the gay world here." "All the Berberi women are respectable." "But," said I, "the most respectable women in my country dance as if it was a part of their duty." "Ah!" replied the Moslem, "son' Christiane, queste," and our conversation terminated with the forest, from which we are now emerged upon a tract of snow-white sand, interspersed with dark piles of granite rock, and shadowed here and there by some scattered palms.

In one of the vacant spaces sat a row of women in a semicircle, surrounded by a crowd of men, all standing, and listening attentively to the concert, which was entirely composed of female voices. The women were all singing very vehemently, accompanying themselves by tambourines, or marking the time by clapping their hands. The moon, brilliant as she was, could not light up their dark faces, and I could only see the gleaming of their eyes. Some few coquettishly turned away their faces as we approached, but soon gave themselves up once more to their absorbing song. It was very wild; but the music was far sweeter and more varied than any I had yet heard in Africa, and there were passages in the ceaseless chant that I would fain have carried away in my memory.

At first, our appearance was unobserved, owing to the shadow in which we stood, and the deep interest with which they listened; but, when we came forward, a mat was spread for us in front of the performers, some shots were fired in our honour, and all the elders of the village came up to salute us. I shook hands with half a dozen of the greasy savages, and made room upon my mat for him who appeared to be the Sheikh. It was a very curious scene, that semicircle of dark women, vehemently chanting their wild song, the wall of fierce-looking figures that surrounded us, the bright moon shining on the white sand, threw these figures into strong relief, while the shadow of a palm flickered and played about, like some huge spider. The Sheikh, with his white beard flowing over his dusky bosom, sat by my side with an appearance of the most perfect nonchalance, as if we had the run of his house, and were in the habit of "looking in of an evening occasionally:" the gloomy-looking groups that surrounded us bristled with long spears, which appeared to be part of their ball-dress.

After a short time, I distributed some small presents among the women, who received them in silence; and then the men began to gather round us, and demanded money and other trifles in a tone that appeared by no means conciliatory, coming from the possessors of spear and shield. We had no choice but to resist at once, briefly, and indignantly; whereupon, an ill-looking ruffian, who very much resembled one of the jackal-headed deities or devils on the tombs at Thebes, demanded why, if we had no money to give them, we came there.

"We have powder," said I, pointing to my pistol; and Mahmoud, starting up in great indignation, began a violent declamation on their want of courtesy and hospitality.

The more decent part of the community

seemed to appreciate his eloquence, and respectfully retired to a little distance; but some of the spearmen gathered round us, and became very clamorous. The women disappeared, and we found ourselves in no very pleasant predicament, standing in the midst of a couple of hundred angry savages, half a mile away from our boat at midnight, in the depths of a Nubian forest.

"This comes of dissipation," observed R.; and the laugh which followed his remark probably stood us in better stead than even the dread of English fire-arms. I made a short speech about strangers, Englishmen, Pashas, &c., which Mahmoud interpreted to the Sheikh: and we prepared to depart with very menacing gestures, as if we had some serious thoughts of sending the whole assembly of dusky fashionables to Cairo as prisoners.

The crowd opened to let our little procession pass: our four sailors in advance; and I, who alone had pistols, in the rear. I paused a moment to shake hands with the decent old Sheikh, shook my fist at the jackal-looking robber, and plunged into the wood with the rest of my party. The last glimpse I caught of the ball room represented the dusky dandies in high debate, which they probably finished by a fight.

An old man, who was suffering from illness, followed us to the boat for medicine. Mahmoud recommended that the dose should be flavoured with arsenic, and gave the invalid a long lecture on the impropriety and impolicy of his fellow-villager's conduct.

I gave the poor old fellow some medicine and advice; and, observing he was nearly blind, was glad to see his son, a tall, gaunt savage with spear and shield, escorting him off among the trees. Mahmoud observed quietly that we had had an escape, and, having lighted our pipes, was asleep in a second.

The next day we passed within the Tropics, and caught glimpses of some very picturesque glens opening into the desert, as we darted on before a spanking breeze. Here the Nile is only about half a mile wide, yet after eight hundred miles of travel, during which it is drunk by all Egypt, and its sands, to say nothing of the thirsty sun, it seems to pour into the sea a greater volume of water than it exhibits here; yet not one tributary stream or drop of water enters it during its progress thither.

We came to an anchor in the evening at Kalabshé, a commanding-looking town, on the right bank of the river. Its inhabitants bear such a character for courage and determination, that neither tax-gatherer nor conscript-catcher has ever ventured within its walls; a practical result of heroism that Jeremy Bentham himself might give it credit for. As usual, a crowd gathered round our boat as soon as we arrived: they were all armed, but quiet, civil, and even respectful. The young men stood apart, but the old men squatted themselves on the bank, and asked for news. The women brought milk, eggs, and poultry to dispose of, and the children produced coins and pebbles. Leaving the antiquities to be explored on our return, we resumed our voyage.

No words can convey an idea of the beauty and delightfulness of tropical weather, at least while any breeze from the North is blowing. There is a pleasure in the very act of breathing, a voluptuous consciousness that existence is a blessed thing; the pulse beats high, but calmly; the eye feels expanded, the chest heaves pleasurably as if air was a delicious draught to thirsty lungs, and the mind takes its colouring and character from sensation. No thought of melancholy ever darkens over us; no painful sense of isolation or of loneliness, as day after day we pass on through silent deserts, upon the silent and solemn river. One seems, as it were, removed into another state of existence; and all the strifes and struggles of that from which we have emerged seem to fade, softened into indistinctness. This is what Homer and Alfred Tennyson knew the lotos-eaters felt when they tasted of the mysterious tree of this country, and became weary of their wanderings:—

"—— To him the gushing of the wave,
Far, far away, did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores: and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE SECOND CATARACT.

When you have lain for weeks together
On such a noble river's breast,
And learnt its face in every weather,
And loved its motions and its rest.

'Tis hard, at some appointed place,
To check your course and turn your prow,
And objects for themselves retrace,
You past with added hope just now.

R. M. Milnes.

If the day, with all its importunate sunshine and its innumerable insects, be enjoyable in the Tropics, the night is still more so. The stars shine out with diamond brilliancy, and appear as large as if seen through a telescope. Their changing colours, the wake of light they cast upon the water, the distinctness of the

milky way, and the splendour, above all, of the evening star, give one the impression of being under a different firmament from that to which we have been accustomed; then, the cool, delicious airs of night, with all the strange and stilly sounds they bear from the desert and the forest; the delicate scents they scatter, and the languid breathings with which they make our large white sails appear to pant, as they flutter softly over the water.

The comet accompanied us all through Nubia, now terminating in a point of diamond brilliance near the western horizon, which seemed to be a focus for all the rays of pale, pulsing light that streamed across the sky.

Thus we ran along the river, day and night, for many a week. Sometimes the weather was so hot, that even our sunburnt sailors could move no longer with the towing-rope, and we lost many hours of noon in idleness, while the sun blazed fiercely on the red desert, which seemed to reflect back his rays with interest on the naked cliffs and on the flashing river. This was the real hour of repose, the silence was intense, and all nature seemed entranced. Happy those who could sleep away that season of importunate sunshine! To read was impossible: languid thought refused to act, and would even dream no longer: imagination's self struck work, the mosquitoes and gnats fell asleep or scorched; and there was nothing for it but pipes, sherbet, and resignation.

But when the sun begins to sink towards the west, where the clouds seem to grow red-hot at his touch and glow like bars of iron in a furnace, then, all nature, from the mountain-breezes to the mosquitoes, seems to revive. The sailors are in motion; the bull-frog begins his bellowing, the few solitary birds their song; the river finds its murmur, and we plunge into its waters, and then take a stroll upon the desert with our guns. As the night comes on, the moonlight gives the reddish-coloured sands the appearance of a snow-covered wold reflecting the glow of some distant conflagration. The sand-hills, among which we wander, are covered here and there with stunted shrubs, on which the gazelle feeds, and among which the lion and the wolf lurk for these deer of the desert.

At some distance from the river I stood alone upon a naked mountain's side, and the prospect was the wildest, loneliest, and dreariest, I had ever witnessed. Far and wide, to the horizon's edge, the trackless, monotonous desert spread its undulations like a sea; but without a shadow, or a fleck of foam, or a sail to enliven its dull, sulky-looking wastes.

There was not even a tree to relieve the view, nor anything on which to rest the weary eye, but the river winding in blue or silver, as the moon, or the shadow fell upon its waters; and on its surface far away floated one small speck, containing the only human hearts that beat within that wide-extended circle of blank desert and unclouded sky.

Then we came to places where the river narrowed like the river Avon under Clifton Downs, and the sailors could often find no footing on the crags; then they would fold their only garment on their head as a turban, and swim in files, drawing the boat-rope in their teeth. These cliffs showed evident marks that the water had once maintained a level many feet above its present bed; but not a shrub, or patch of moss, or lichen, clothed those cindrous-looking rocks.

After leaving this desert and this gorge, we opened upon a broad, calm river, and a country which appeared to smile with verdure in comparison to that which we had come from. As the river broadened, there appeared an island which would have been beautiful anywhere; and here was like a glimpse of paradise. Palm-groves waved over peaceful villages, green lawns were speckled with flocks and herds, luxuriant corn-fields were parked off by light palings, melon gardens ran along the river's verdant border, which was flecked with their golden fruit and flower; groves of the lote-tree and acacia sheltered the blossoming bean and lupine from the sun, and the whole scene seemed full of peace and gentle prosperity.

As we slowly glided past this Eden, the inhabitants came to the water's edge to gaze upon the strangers; little children, hand in hand, almost too small to grasp the other: an old man, with flowing beard and patriarchal robes, was leaning on a graceful girl, whose unveiled limbs displayed a model of symmetry: the few other people whom we saw were employed in some light labour, from which they ran smilingly to watch our boat as she glided away from a spot which, to this moment, appears to me to have realised all that poets feign of the Golden Age.

In little more than a fortnight we returned, and passed by that little isle again. Hell let loose could scarcely have wrought a more fearful change than that which presented itself. The cottages were blackened and reeking ruins; the palm-trees were cut down, the gardens trampled and strewn with many a corpse, the dry corn burnt to the ground; the gentle natives all gone, and replaced by a fierce soldiery, who prowled about this harvest of misery, as if in search of further gleanings. Boats were passing to and fro, busily conveying the little wealth of the islanders to the encampment in the mainland, and returning with the horses and camels of

the invaders to eat up the standing crops. And what was become of the inhabitants? those whom I had almost envied as I passed them by upon my desert way? The men were, for the most part, slain, and the less fortunate were outcasts on the desert or the mountain. The children were sold into slavery, the women became the prey of that demon soldiery whose arms now gleamed from every dark rock round: and that gentle girl—where was she? My blood boiled with indignation; I cursed the Pasha, his bloody policy, and the fiends who ministered to it; and asked Mahmoud if he did not blush to belong to the same race as the authors of this desolation. He shook his head, and said "it was all God's will!"

It seems that one of the natives of this island had been murdered by one of a neighbouring district, and, according to the custom of the country, the friends of the murdered man demanded vengeance, or declared that they would take it. The Governor of Nubia happened to be travelling down the Nile at the time, and, hearing of the circumstance, sent for the chiefs of the respective tribes. The friends of the murderer having sent him a large bribe, he presented a slave (slaves are of no value here) to the injured party, and said, "Here is the man who slew your islander; kill him, and depart in peace." "Nay," replied the injured party, "the slave only acted by the command of his master; we will have that master's life, or else kill the Sheikh of the village." The Turkish governor, in a rage, ordered them to leave his presence, which they did, but first asserted their right and defied his power.

The Turk proceeded to Dirr, procured a force of three hundred soldiers, descended the river to the island, attacked it in the night-time, and we arrived the morning after this exhibition of Oriental justice.

We passed Korosko for the present unvisited, and pushed on for Dirr, whence, it being late when we arrived, and the breeze being fair, we continued our course to Ipsamboul. Even this we left behind us, the spacious ruined castle of Ibreem, standing on a commanding hill, reflected in the water; and here, where the river widens, we found quite a sea running. To the left, from a perfectly level tract of sand started up some rocks of the most singular form; one of them a pyramid as perfect as that of Cheops; another nearly in the shape of a sphinx, but all the workmanship of Nature.

This country was once under the government of Ibreem and Hassan Kiashef, who are of the same Turkish blood, and came into the country with Sultan Selim's army. The latter assumed kingly authority, which Mehemet Ali deprived him of, and gave him in compensation a retirement of seven thousand piastres (about £70) per annum, instead of his royal revenue, with a few villages, and twenty-five sakeeyahs. On our return we were presented to this dethroned sovereign.

We encountered few incidents, and never met a boat upon the lonely river but one, crowded with slaves from Abyssinia. These captives are all Christians when caught, but are immediately Moslemised, lest they should die upon their passage from Moslem barbarity, and that Mahomet should lose their souls, as well as the dealer their bodies.

On the eighth day after leaving Philœ, we arrived at Wady Halfa, about five miles to the south of the Second Cataract, which is impassable to boats. We were now about a thousand miles from the sea, and held council as to our future proceedings.

The debate was opened by a glowing description of the savage beauties of Abyssinia, and the giraffe and hippopotamus shooting in the meadows of Gondar. The confluence of the Blue and White Rivers at Khartoum was *only* twenty-five days' journey across the desert, and then the interesting part of the journey would commence. At present, the thermometer stood at 110°. What of that? the swinging pace, and the height of the dromedary, would circulate air about us, and elevate us from the reflection of the desert's burning sands. All in vain were these arguments. We had been already five weeks in Savagedom, among sands, and deserts, and scorching sunshines, and, to say the truth, we had had enough of it. Hurrah! then, for the cool breezy north, the dashing sea, and the Syrian saddle; enough of this bed-ridden, dreamy life, so charming a few weeks since. Forward! to a life of action, novelty, and newspapers, and let Abyssinia, Meroë, and the desert, sleep on in their solitudes.

Mahmoud heard with comparative apathy the result of the debate, if such it might be called, where two were of the same opinion. To him a few months' wandering more or less was a matter of indifference; when he parted from us, it was only to recommence his journeyings with other travellers.

This resolve having been come to, we stood away again up the river as far as the Cataract would allow. Then, landing on the Western bank, we set out across the desert to Mount Abousir, a steep and rocky hill that overlooks the whole range of the cataract, and commands a far view into the country beyond.

Soon after we struck into the desert, we came to an altar, sheltered by the only tree that was visible within the horizon. This altar was erected in honour of a santon, or Moslem saint, who, fortunately for the world, had perished here. It was dark-red with dried blood, and clotted with the gore of num-

berless victims. These santons are generally durweeshes who have become insane, and their insanity passes for inspiration, the body acting blindly, while the mind is absorbed in the contemplation of the deity. These ferocious fanatics wander about the country, committing all sorts of atrocities and indecencies, under the shelter of their sacred character. Man or woman denies them nothing; and after their death, altars such as these are erected to their memory, of which blood is a fitting commemoration. On these altars the Moslems make vows, in cases of illness, barrenness, and danger, and propitiate the santon's spirit by the sacrifices of cocks and kids.

The sun was intensely hot, the wind was high, and the air occasionally darkened by clouds of sand-dust whirled from the hills. We rode for some miles along the bank of the river, that rushed and foamed amongst a hundred little rocky islands, which the incessant spray had clothed with verdure and low shrubs; and which here shone emerald green diamonded with dew among the dark eddies of the torrent.

On resuming our desert path, we picked up some of the apples of Sodom that lay strewn upon the desert without apparent connection with any stem. They were of a bright gold-green, about the size of an orange, but perfectly round and smooth. They gave the idea of being swelled out with the richest juice, that, when bitten, must gush forth to meet the thirsting lip. The reader knows the real state of the case; the gilt ball on the top of St. Paul's is not less nutritious. You crush the rind, and a cloud of fetid dust bursts forth, which leaves only a few little cinders in residue.

At length we arrived at the mountain, very hot and very weary, and, what was worse, without any prospect of shelter or refreshment; when, turning a corner of the rock, we found the exemplary Mahmoud had been before us; and there the tent spread its cool shade, and the coffee bubbled, and the pipes were only waiting to be lighted.

Never did I feel more grateful for kind service. I had been ill for some days, and now, though utterly exhausted, I could lie upon a soft carpet spread upon the glowing sands, and from the shade of the tent survey at leisure the marvellous view that spread before us.

There—one wide, wild, desolate waste—lay the once fertile kingdom of Nubia, beneath our view. Except the few shrubs that crawled upon the river islands, and a grove of palms far away over Wady Halfa, there was not an appearance of life or vegetation under the sky: blank, utterly blank, and mournful deserts spread round us on all sides to the very horizon. Far away to the south, the river gleamed bluely; but then, entering the falls, it became black with shadows, or white with foam, until, after a tortured course of ten or twelve miles, it found rest in the wide levels of Wady Halfa. The rocks about us were of sandstone, grey and red, and there were some large masses of this stone turned on the upper side into scoria, having been partially fused by some means which only He who made them knows. There were also some boulders of granite lying about, but there was no rock of that description that I could discover; yet this was the highest spot for some fifty miles round.

When rested, I walked down among the cliffs with our guide, who was an intelligent old Arab, and who spoke like a sportsman of the gazelles that come there to drink on moonlight nights, and the hyænas that come to watch them. Crocodiles are very numerous below the cataract, but they are never seen in lively water. A hippopotamus made great ravages some time ago, near Wady Halfa, but he had not been seen for the last twelvemonth. Some few gray swallows flitted about the mountain, and these were the only living things I saw upon that scorching rock.

There are many names carved on this bourn of travellers; amongst others, those of Belzoni, in 1816, Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, Lord Lindsay and his lost friend, whose name I re-carved with care, as one of the few memorials that remain of one of the most amiable of men. There were many other names, but only one of woman that I could trace: it was simply written "Fanny," and was more probably carved in memory of one who was far away in her happy English home, than of one who stood upon that mountain by the carver's side.

The moon shone brightly over the desert as we regained our floating home, which presented a very altered appearance: the mainmast had been taken out, and lashed from the foremast to the poop; it supported an awning for the sailors, who were now to row perpetually, all hope of a southerly wind being vain in these regions. The kitchen had been removed also to the foremast, which raked forward from the bows, and resembled rather a very supercilious bowsprit. But the principal change was that her bow was turned northwards down the stream and towards Christendom. We went on board, under these altered circumstances, with wonderful satisfaction; and, after a prayer to Allah for a prosperous voyage, the men took their seats for a month's rowing, and we started.

We had only reached Wady Halfa, however, which lies on the eastern bank, when a gale of wind came on with such violence that we were obliged to lie-to for the night.

In the course of his village explorations R. had met with a merchant, who was on his way from Khartoom to Cairo. He came on board to visit us; and, as we were detained in this desolate place for three days, we had great reason to congratulate ourselves in having made such an agreeable addition to our party. He was a very gentle soft-spoken slave-dealer, named Lemello, and had come originally from Italy, his native country, to join the Pasha's service, as a physician to the forces at Khartoom. This situation he had resigned in consequence of some misunderstanding, and had taken to a merchant's life, traversing those deserts in the heats of summer and the dreariness of winter. He pointed out to us his encampment on the opposite side of the river, a little lower down, and invited us to visit him.

The next morning our pilot, the Hippopotamus, was not forthcoming, and we took a stroll about the scattered village of Wady Halfa whilst waiting for him. The cabins, built of mud and Indian corn-stalks, were always in shade of palm-trees, without which their heat would have been intolerable; some tame ostriches, and a queer-looking animal that seemed a cross of the buffalo and the goat,* were running about the enclosure; a small tract of vegetation surrounded the village, whose inhabitants, however, principally depended on the date-trees for their subsistence. A little rivulet ran through the open space, pumped up from the river by a water-wheel. Small furrows conducted the water to the crops, or the foot of each date-tree, as it was required, and was then diverted by the foot into other channels. Wherever that little rivulet ran, its alchemy transmuted the desert into a garden. These sands are, in fact, dried mud, apparently, and require nothing but moisture to convert them into the richest soil. This is the case in all the valleys of Nubia, at least; and as the analysis of the *mud* gives a proportion of seventy of silex in every hundred of other matter, it would seem that the former was sufficient to account for the seashore look of all the sands in Africa, which vary in colour from red to grey, and even to white.

Tired of waiting for the Hippopotamus, we set out from Wady Halfa without him; but our progress, even across the stream, was very slow, owing to the storm. When we were about half way over the river, which here is perhaps a mile and a half wide, we saw the pilot swimming towards us in the distance, his clothes wrapped in a turban on his head. We rested on our oars, and watched his progress for some time with anxiety, when a faint shriek along the stormy waters told to our quick-eared crew that he was sinking! It seemed even then hopeless to save him; he was a quarter of a mile distant; the waves ran high, and crocodiles swarmed in the water; and it was *we* who had insisted on leaving the village without him. It was a painful moment when we saw the poor fellow's arms tossed in air, fearing that his voice could not be heard; and this was his simple and only appeal for help. Nor was it in vain. Before his cry had died away, two of our Arabs had flung off their gowns—thrown a plank into the water—and, before the most eager voice could cheer them on, they plunged among the waves, shoving the plank forward as they swam, and struggled gallantly to reach the drowning man. We strained every nerve to follow them, but the storm was too strong for us, and we were only driving further off. Still, the daring swimmers struggled more and more desperately towards their perishing comrade; still fainter and fainter grew the hope of saving him. From the time he saw the men plunge into the water, he made no sign, and uttered no sound, but resigned himself to his destiny and his God. Our crew, usually so noisy, lay crouching at their oars, hushed as death in the intensity of suspense. And now, when his gallant comrades are within a few yards of him, and he is all but safe, his dark face dips under the foam; and then, his turban sinks, and sinks so slowly, that we could scarcely believe it gone! A groan, that burst from every pent-up bosom in the boat, told that all was over, and then there was silence as deep as that of the grave to which he had gone down. How fearfully and vividly then flashed before our eyes the desolation of his humble home, the shriek of his widow among the wild forests where he dwelt, and we—but, hold!—the turban reappears for a moment above the water, and, while it balances, one dashing effort—one bold spring—may save him yet. Now, Mohammed's dark figure is seen almost leaping from the water; now there is no living thing above the waves; and now—hurrah! —there are three! Supported on either side by his deliverers, his head drooping on his shoulder, the poor pilot is there, indeed, and is now using his own exhausted efforts to advance. Now again we strained desperately at the oars, and at length got way enough on her to reach a sandbank, the far end of which the swimmers had just arrived at.

Once on board, the apathetic Arabs received the pilot with indifference: we found he was or had been very drunk, as usual; and he who, but a few moments before, had been the centre of absorbing interest, was now neglected as a blackguard. The two brave fellows who had saved him seemed as much

* I believe the "Moufflon" of Buffon.

surprised as grateful when they found themselves rewarded for such a trifling service as saving a Nubian's life.

On reaching the opposite bank, we discovered our Italian friend's caravan resting near some ruins in the desert; the camels kneeling, and their burdens strewn upon the ground. A little further on we found the merchant's tent, supported by the only tree in the desert. A pile of camel-chests formed a wall against the storm, and from these a thick awning extended to the tree, which was hung round with weapons, pipes, and capotes. The ground was strewed with mats and carpets; and some tiger-skins, spread on dromedary saddles, with a few cushions, completed the furniture of this desert establishment.

Two young Abyssinian girls lay couched in the interior of the tent, both finely formed, and one extremely pretty. She had a fine intellectual forehead, brilliant and speaking eyes, a regular mouth, a delicate oval countenance, and a slight but finely rounded figure, which her attitude displayed to advantage. She seemed to read in our countenances every word we spoke; and, when the conversation turned upon her, the poor savage showed a modesty not invariably found in European drawing-rooms. Lemello told us that these two girls were the only associates of his wandering life. The elder, of whom I have spoken, was only eleven years of age, though she appeared at least seventeen. He said she was very docile, faithful, and affectionate; and concluded by offering to sell her to me for £18! She evidently understood his meaning, and blushed, I thought, through all the darkness of her cheek: if it was for him, she performed a more necessary office than that of even lighting his chibouque.

After the usual form of pipes and coffee, we were entertained with a display of his merchandize, which was very various. The more massive part consisted of skins, tamarinds in dry cakes, and ebony clubs. We bought some precious stones, hippopotamus' teeth, and kurbashes, which are whips made of thongs cut from his horny hide. He told us, on his return he should take back silks, jewellery, and cutlery, to the interior, and that articles of English manufacture were always inquired for by even the remotest savages with whom he dealt.

We proceeded in company with our travelled friend to explore a temple that was nearly buried in sand. There are about twenty columns, some painted, some sculptured, and we determined on sending to Wady Halfa for men to excavate it. A change of wind coming on, however, changed our purpose; and we took an affectionate leave of our mercantile friend (who, we found out afterwards, had taken us in, in every article we had purchased from him).

The men now fairly betook themselves to their oars, and, raising their wild, enthusiastic song, we began our homeward voyage.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### ANTIQUITIES OF NUBIA.

Here Desolation keeps unbroken sabbath,
'Mid caves, and temples, palaces, and sepulchres;
Ideal images in sculptured forms,
Thoughts hewn in columns, or in caverned hill,
In honour of their deities and of their dead.
JAMES MONTGOMERY.

We rowed all day, and floated all night at the river's will, from the time we commenced our northern course. The reader by this time must be as tired of river scenery, palms, villages, and deserts, as, to say the truth, we began to be ourselves. I shall, therefore, only allude, as we pass, to the architectural marvels that fringe this unique river.

Towards evening, on the second day, after leaving Wady Halfa, we repassed the extraordinary group of pyramidal and other rocky mountains I have mentioned in ascending the river, and then arrived at the chief wonder of Nubia, if not of all the Valley of the Nile. The correct name of this rock-temple is Abou-Symbal; but it is so much more generally known as Ipsamboul, that I shall make use of that name; writing as I do for English, not for Arab readers.

After sailing for some hours through a country quite level on the eastern bank, we come upon a precipitous rocky mountain, which starts up so suddenly from the river's edge that its very summits are reflected in the water. We moored under a sandbank, and, accompanied by half a dozen of the crew with torches, approached this isolated and stupendous rock. Yet, even here, the daring Genius of Ethiopian architecture ventured to enter into rivalry with Nature's greatness, and found her material in the very mountain that seemed to bid defiance to her efforts.

On the face of the vertical cliff, a recess is excavated, to the extent of about a hundred feet in width. From this, four gigantic figures, stand out in very bold relief. Between the two central stony giants, a lofty doorway opens into a vast hall supported by square pillars, each the size of a tower, and covered with hieroglyphics: just enough painting still glimmers faintly on these columns to show that they were formerly covered with it; and the walls are carved into historic figures in slight relief, which, as our torches threw an uncertain glare over

them, seemed to move, and to become instinct with life.

This temple was dedicated to Athor, the lady of Aboccis (the ancient name of Ipsamboul). She is represented within under the form of the Sacred Cow. This was, however, a mere chapel of ease to the great temple, excavated from a loftier rock about fifty yards distant. Between these two a deep gorge once ran to the river, but this is now choked up with sand, in whose burning waves we waded knee-deep to the Temple of Osiris.

Here, a space of about 100 feet in height is hewn from the mountain, smooth, except for the reliefs. Along the summit runs a frieze of little monkeys, in long array, as if the architect felt the absurdity of the whole business, or as Byron sometimes finishes off a sublime sentence with a scoff. Then succeeds a line of hieroglyphics, and some faintly-carved figures, also in relief; and then four colossal giants that seem to guard the portal. They are seated on thrones (which form with themselves part of the living rock), and are about sixty feet high. One is quite perfect, admirably cut, and the proportions accurately preserved; the second is defaced as far as the knee; the third is buried in sand to the waist, and the fourth has only the face and neck visible above the desert's sandy avalanche. The doorway stands between the two central statues, and is surmounted by a statue of Isis wearing the moon as a turban.

On entering, the traveller finds himself in a temple which a few days' work might restore to the state in which it was left just finished, 3000 years ago. The dry climate and its extreme solitude have preserved its most delicate details from injury; besides which, it was hermetically sealed by the desert for thousands of years, until Burckhardt discovered it, and Mr. Hay cleared away its protecting sands.

A vast and gloomy hall, such as Eblis might have given Vathek audience in, receives you on passing from the flaming sunshine into that shadowy portal. It is some time before the eye can ascertain its dimensions through the imposing gloom contrasted with that glare; but gradually there reveals itself, around and above you, a vast aisle, with pillars formed of eight colossal giants, upon whom the light of heaven has never shone. These images of Osiris are backed by enormous pillars, behind which run two great galleries, and in these torchlight alone enabled us to peruse a series of sculptures in relief, representing the triumphs of Remesis the Second, or Sesostris. The painting, which once enhanced the effect of these spirited representations, is not dimmed, but crumbled away; where it exists the colours are as vivid as ever.

This unequalled hall is one hundred feet in length; and eight lesser chambers, all sculptured, open from it to the right and left. Straight on, is a low doorway, opening into a second hall of similar height, supported by four square pillars; and within all, is the adytum, in which is a simple altar of the living rock, behind which there are four large figures seated on rocky thrones. This inner shrine is hewn at least one hundred yards into the rock; and here, in these silent depths of that great mountain, those awful Idols, and that mysterious altar of human sacrifice, had a very solemn and imposing effect. The statues seemed to sit there waiting for some great summons which should reanimate them, and Isaiah's apostrophe to Nebuchadnezzar came vividly upon my mind as I gazed on these "kings of the earth who lie in glory, every one in his own house."

We wandered through many chambers, in which the air is so calm and undisturbed, that the very smell of the torches of the last explorers of these caverns was perceptible.

After leaving Ipsamboul, we crossed over to a cavern in the opposite cliff, where is also hewn a rock-temple, called Gebal Adha, which was used in later times as a Christian church.

It was a curious sight to see images of our Saviour, and the Virgin, blazoned in glowing colours on those walls and roofs, surrounded by trophies and memorials of the idols whose worship they had swept away. Steps, also hewn in the rock, descended to a certain distance towards the river, and then suddenly ceased; a convincing proof, among many others, that the level of the waters was much higher even so lately as the christening of this temple than they are at present. Besides, where now could dwell the worshippers for those temples, or the believers for that church? Not, surely, in the interminable desert wastes that alone encompass them at present.

The temples at Ipsamboul both date from the time of Remesis the Second, or, by which name he is better known, of Sesostris. His history is deeply indebted to the stony chronicles in which the chisel wrote them here. The deities of the cataracts, Kneph, Saté, and Anouké, are represented also, beside almost all the élite of the Theban deities. There is also here a curious Greek inscription, commemorative of the desertion of the Carians and Ionians of Psammitichus, who, thinking themselves neglected by the Egyptian Horse-guards, deserted and emigrated into Æthiopia.

From these temples we dropped down the river, reading the Prophecies by the light alone of a most brilliant moon. We shot some dangerous rapids formed by a reef of

rocks called Tosko; then passed the castle of Ibrahim which Candace defended from Petronius, the lieutenant of Julius Cæsar; and which Sultan Selim also used as a garrison to keep the Nubians in check.

The next morning we moored at Dirr, the chief town of Nubia, and went ashore to visit the king, as Mahmoud called Hassan Kiashef. It is a town of mud-houses, rather better built than any we had previously seen, scattered among gardens of herbs, melons, cucumbers, &c., and every dwelling sheltered by its own palms. Crowds of children collected round us, and accompanied our progress through the mud metropolis. All the women, too, ran to their doors to gaze at the white strangers, who, by the bye, deserved the epithet by this time as little as the Dirrians themselves. Mahmoud was very eloquent in his description of a celebrated beauty, who, he declared, was as fair as any English lady! It may be supposed we were not a little anxious to compare our impressions with his upon the subject, and lurked among the trees while he went up to the door, and tapped gently. She came out, rejoiced to see an old acquaintance, and exhibited a countenance, pretty, no doubt; but, until our island-beauties become the colour of a faded lemon, and their noses swell, they need not fear rivalry from those of Dirr. We had not much time to observe her, though she seemed by no means coy; for her mother, on discovering us, screamed out an execration, and, dragging her into the house, slapped the door in our faces.

We continued our progress to the palace, which was a mud building of immense extent, including many courts and stables. In front was an open space, shadowed by a noble sycamore, some travellers reclining under its shade on carpets, with two or three camels standing near. His sable majesty had been transacting some business with the Turkish governor, and we now saw him returning to the palace, attended by half-a-dozen other very old men, all dressed in green or blue robes, and wearing very large, white turbans; this dress, together with their long, grey beards, gave the procession an imposing appearance; and it was not without some real reverence we made our salutation, which was very condescendingly returned. Our Nubian pilot ran up, and, seizing the passive hand of his sovereign, pressed it to his lips, and then placed it on his head. The poor old chief walked very erect, but listlessly; and his countenance wore an expression of long suffering and sorrow. He courteously motioned us to follow, and led the way through several enclosures to a hall of audience that resembled in most respects a barn. It was a large, dreary-looking room, with two window-(places). The only furniture consisted of a divan covered with an old carpet, a few mats spread upon the floor, and a little shelf of unpainted wood, on which lay a rusty brace of pistols, a rude hammer, and some nothings. A few very primitive-looking swords, spears, and shields, were the only attempts at ornament.

Cheerless as was the aspect of the apartment, it seemed to suit the condition of the king, whose desolate and state-fallen condition consorted too faithfully with that of his dreary and forlorn kingdom. His sons were all away, scattered over various parts of their father's desert realms; he had recently dismissed all his wives from his harem; and his careworn old heart knew nothing of the comfort that cheers the old age which in return sanctifies an English home.

The royal savage received us with that air of lofty, yet gentle courtesy, which long and legitimate authority seems always to confer; and we seated ourselves as respectfully on his ragged carpet as if Mehemet Ali had never been known in Nubia.

"Not all the water in the rough, rude sea, can wash the balm from an anointed king," I muttered to myself; though the water be the Nile, and castor be the oil.

While we took our seats by his side, in compliance with his invitation, the elders of the village who had accompanied him seated themselves on the mats upon the floor, and the black mob waited outside, filling the doorway with a mass of ivory teeth, and woolly heads, and glittering eyes. After about ten minutes' conversation concerning the history and antiquities of his country, of which he professed himself profoundly ignorant, he broke up the levee by asking for some powder, and a knife, and raisins; and we rose. We thought this was rather a beggarly termination of a royal audience, but promised the valuables, and departed. We were followed by a crowd of naked menials, clamouring for "baksheesh," because one had handed coffee, another sugar, and the rest had been present at our presentation.

We visited a very curious rock-temple on the borders of the desert which runs within a mile of the metropolis, and returned to our boat with some fruit and a couple of chameleons. These little creatures amused us very much by their inconsistency of colour, their quaint expression of countenance, and their habits. When quiet, they were of a delicate grass green; when excited, they became brown, with bright blue heads; and when very angry, they turned nearly black, and became very much inflated. When allowed to run about, they used to lay hold with their long, versatile tails, and if they were forced from their places, they changed colour at

the same time, as if to persuade us they were different chameleons, and that it was not them we wanted. Might not this afford a hint to political caricaturists?

We sailed away in the afternoon, and visited the temple of Ammăda, about four miles down the river, on the eastern bank. It is very beautifully painted and sculptured, and, standing alone in the desert, some distance from the river, it is one of the most striking sights that occur upon the river.

On our return to the boat, in the short twilight, we put up a fox and a hyæna, but could not get shots at either, or imagine what was their inducement to wander about in such a fleshless spot.

Proceeding some hours further the next day, we arrived at Korosko, a village situated in a green oasis of a valley, surrounded by dark, lofty precipices, through the gorge of which lies the desert route to Shendy. We found here a caravan and some officers of the Pasha's army, going to Sennaar. The scene was rendered very picturesque by the encampment of the latter; their green and white tents scattered among the palms; their horses picketted on a grassy bank near the shore; and, further inland, groups of camels and dromedaries were reposing among the scattered cottages, their swarthy attendants squatting on carpets, or sauntering with their pipes among the groves. The women were gleaning in the cornfields; the men, nearly naked, with spear, and shield, and long black hair, were watching their flocks; and probably presented exactly the appearance that their father Ishmael wore four thousand years ago.

As I sate under a palm-tree, watching this varied scene and all its different people with their various avocations, the weather suddenly changed; the sun set pale and dim in a most dismal, murky haze; enormous masses of lurid clouds went rolling across the sky; faint sounds of thunder kept time with the march of the storm among the mountain, and lightning flashed in large sheets, like banners among the cloudy columns. Everything appeared to threaten a hurricane and torrents of rain; but the menace passed away as rapidly as it came; in an hour the moon shone brightly through a cloudless sky, and we were pulling away over a glassy water that reflected every star.

An illness which I had been for some time struggling against now confined me to my bed—my board, rather—and I was indebted to my kind friend R. for an account of all the remaining antiquities in Nubia, except Guerf Hassen. At this time, I scarcely expected to recover, and being rather an epicurean in such matters preferred being buried, if such an operation should be necessary, at Philœ, to any of the hyæna-haunted wastes we were now traversing. In this climate, death and burial must be nearly simultaneous; so we pushed on day and night to the beautiful island of Isis, stopping, dutifully, nevertheless, at every place marked in the guide-books as indispensable to be visited. These guide-books are very scant above the first cataract; even Sir Gardner Wilkinson touches lightly on these localities, and St. John ceases to be diffuse. Burckhardt and Belzoni speak of them, without having understood their history; and Lord Lindsay's travels are, on the whole, perhaps the most informing, as well as entertaining, that we possess.

Wady Sebou, or Valley of the Lions, raised our expectations of seeing some of these animals, *au naturel;* but we found them unknown; and books informed us that the valley obtained its name from the sphinxes that form the approach to its rock-hewn temple. Of these only two now remain, on each side, and a statue with a stelæ.

Then we entered again upon a desert country, which continued until we reached Seyala. Here our attention was called to a very singular phenomenon by Mahmoud's exclaiming, "Ecco! il soffio del diavolo!" and pointing towards the desert, whence towered a vast column of sand, increasing as it whirled along to a mountain size. It strode the river and the waste like a flash of lightning, and disappeared over the far horizon. They say it is fatal to every living thing it overtakes unexpectedly, destroying whole caravans as instantaneously as the angel smote the Assyrians.

The little village of Seyala stands some distance from the river. It is surrounded on all sides by a very wide and lonely desert, which recalled forcibly that sublime expression of Isaiah's, "The burden of the desert of the sea;" and, lo! towering above that sea, comes sailing a ship of the desert, with its pilot Arab. This traveller presented a fine specimen of the Bedouin warrior: his white dromedary careered silently and swiftly over the trackless sands, his white robes fluttered in the breeze, a snowy turban shaded his swarthy visage, and his attitude seemed at once full of energy and repose. The vision was sudden in its appearance and vanishing, and was in such perfect keeping with the desert, that the wastes seemed no longer desolate; though nothing was visible there except that white dromedary, and the dark shadow which alone accompanied it on its solitary way. The equipage of the desert-warrior was very simple; a large bundle of provender for his beast, and a water-skin hung at either side: he was armed with spear and shield, of course; a cumbrous

sword swung from his saddle-bow, and a short knife strapped to his naked arm completed his appointments.

Advancing day and night, we next stopped at Dakké, the stronghold of old Ethiopian Magic, where Trismegisthus was adored, to whose honour a temple still remains with some sculptures.

But we were now approaching Guerf Hassan, which appeared to me the most striking and characteristic spot in Nubia, even while having Ipsamboul vividly in recollection. Ill as I was, I determined to visit this stupendous temple, and I was well repaid for the exertion. It is the strangest, most unearthly sight I ever beheld. It was dark when we arrived in its neighbourhood, but this did not signify, as its mysterious recesses were only visible to torchlight in the brightest noon. Covered with a sheet, I was carried on a bier by four Arabs of our crew, who relieved each other in turn; four more carried torches, and my friend R. and Mahmoud brought up the rear. It must have appeared rather a curious procession to the Nubian village that we passed through, hundreds of whose inhabitants, half or wholly naked, poured out to see us pass; and some of the men remonstrated anxiously in favour of extinguishing the torches until we had passed through the cornfields—these were all so dry, that a general conflagration would have been the consequence of a spark falling on a single straw.

We passed through these fields; then came a strip of desert, then a tall cliff, and the enormous propylæa of the temple stood before us. This is built by human hands, but stands out from the face of the mountain as if it had formed part of it from creation. Four giant statues leaning against square pillars support a massive entablature. The vista of this colossal portico leads to a portal in the living rock some twenty feet in height, and this is the entrance to the temple. The coup d'œil as we entered was very imposing; a group of our swarthy Arabs were waving blazing torches, and looked like officiating demon-priests, to the calm, awful, gigantic idols that towered above us. The temples seemed *full* of these grim statues, though there are only two rows, containing four in each. The massive pedestals on which they stand are but ten feet apart, which adds considerably to the effect of their enormous size. Hence we passed into a lesser hall, and then into the adytum. Numerous torches here gleamed upon walls, shadowily giving out pictured battles, and kneeling priests, and stern deities; and in the centre of the shrine was a rude altar, within which sat four gigantic idols, with strange-looking crowns upon their heads, and mysterious emblems in their hands.

It would have been either a very strong or a very indifferent mind that could remain without some sense of awe in such a scene, or deny that it was well calculated to inspire such religious feeling as the eye alone can communicate to the soul.

There were many other chambers; but we soon returned to the outer hall, and again reverently traversed its solemn aisles and galleries. Everywhere pillar and entablature were thickly encrusted with reliefs, and many a day might be passed in this sculptured library before its vast volumes were exhausted of their interest and meaning.

Once more the torches gleamed over god and warrior, and cavern and shrine; and we returned to our boat.

I cannot help thinking that the appearance of this rock-temple is more imposing than that of Ipsamboul itself. Its portico adds very much to its effect, and if its dimensions are less, the admirable skill of the architect atones for this, by a subtlety of design that makes the eye mistrust mere measurement. In the church of St. Peter's, at Rome, the keeping and proportion of every part is so perfect, that its vast size is only ascertainable by experience and reflection: the pen, in the hand of St. Mark, which seems of the natural size, is twelve feet long, and the apparently child-like cherubs are taller than grenadiers. In Guerf Hassan, on the contrary, the principal hall is only about sixty feet high, yet it conveys an idea of immensity. How is it that the more perfect Art produces an effect less than the reality, while the barbarian far exaggerates it?

After Guerf Hassan comes the little temple of Dandour, rich in hieroglyphics; and then Kalabshé. We found the inhabitants of this warlike little city in a great state of excitement, on account of the desolation of the island, which I have narrated in ascending the river. They asked eagerly for powder, and we only wished we could have given them barrels of it; they also inquired anxiously if we had seen the governor, whose avenging visit they also were expecting, and preparing a warm reception for.

Here is one of the largest and most perfect temples in Nubia, and, about two miles distant, another named Beit el Wellee. This last is of the Pharaonic times, and is adorned with beautiful paintings, whose colours are very fresh and vivid.

Near here are some rapids, which we had great difficulty in prevailing on our drunken Nubian pilot to take us through without daylight: we insisted on it, however; and the moon glanced on eddies of foam as we darted here and there among the rugged reefs that strewed the river.

It required great exertion to keep steerage-

way on the boat in this rapid stream, but our crew pulled gallantly, rising to their feet at every stroke of their ponderous oars, flourishing their naked figures, as they tossed one hand wildly in the air, and then, with a frightful yell, threw themselves back upon their stroke, till they reached their seats.

The following day we passed the temple of Debod unvisited, and, towards evening, arrived at Philœ, having been only fifteen days on our journey to the Second Cataract.

Being now much recovered, I struggled up to visit once more those marvellous temples; once more I gazed from their terraces on the exquisitely beautiful prospect below, and then flung myself exhausted on the carpet in the shadow of our tent, which was now pitched upon the island shore. The lake was soon specked by people swimming, or rowing themselves on logs of wood, to visit us and sell to us; so that we had a large levee before the sun went down and accumulated articles of savage virtù sufficient to have stocked an Ethiopian Howell and James's.

Soon after daylight on the following morning, the Rais of the Cataract made his appearance, bringing with him eight athletic Nubians accustomed to the rapids and his voice, to row the boat instead of our own crew. After salāms, and pipes, and coffee, we made sail and floated away, surrounded by rafts and swimmers, and water-logs, carrying double. We soon left all these behind, and, in a short time more, our beautiful Philœ disappeared behind the tall cliffs for ever.

When we approached the Cataract, we stopped near a reef of rocks, to take in the old grey pilot of the falls, and instantly a score of Nubians darted out of the crowd upon our decks. Being already very top-heavy, owing to the mast and spars that were lashed to the foremast and poop, we desired Mahmoud to clear the decks — in vain: one was a rais, and had a right to the risk of being drowned; another was his servant, another his cousin; and we finally shoved off, with five-and-thirty natives crowded on our narrow deck.

The celebrated old Rais of all the Cataract is dead, and his possessions seem to have descended in various falls to each of his sons, for there were several of these on board looking after their claims. The village Sheikh was there for the same purpose, and the Rais of the Lower Cataract also favoured us with his company, in order to ensure *his* share.

"Yallough!" we are off. The Nubian river-guides pull away desperately, shouting a vehement song to which their oars keep rapid time, and we rush on to the calm space where the waters seem to pause before they plunge below. The chief Rais stands at the bow, gesticulating violently, watching eagerly every motion of the boat, and shouting out directions to the pilot, which were drowned in the yell of the rowers, the roar of the torrent, and the vociferations of every one on board, except ourselves and the old pilot, who stood erect and silent, watching every wave with a calm but vivid eye.

Now we are in the Cataract—the waves foam up over the deck, and the spray renders everything invisible, except where the dark cliffs loom for a moment through its clouds; the boat darts wildly on through the weltering waters—a sharp rock seems to await her—she shuns it like a bird, and plunges down another cataract; then fairly spins round in its eddies, till, urged into way again by the sweeping oars, she seems to hover for a moment over the great fall;—then, down she goes, as if performing a summerset; and we emerge about a hundred yards off from rock and rapid, and exploit, which this last descent certainly deserves the name of.

We were now on the Egyptian Nile once more; we discharged our Raises, who did not even ask for backsheesh, and went away looking as cheerful as their careworn countenances would permit; and we also dismissed our drunken pilot, but in a very different temper.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### ESNEH, THE ALMÉ, AND THE ARNAOUTS.

As o'er the sands, in evening's glow,
That temple threw its lengthening shade,
Upon the marble steps below
There sate a fair Egyptian maid.

*Epicurean.*

Fierce are Albania's children. . . .
For never yet hath daybeam burned
Upon a brow more fierce than that,—
In which the stranger's eye could read
Dark tales of many a ruthless deed;—
The ruined maid, the shrine profaned,
Oaths broken, and the threshold stained
With blood of guests—there written all. . . .

MOORE.

Our anxiety for English letters and news acquired force, like gravitation, as we descended the river; and we only stopped at Assouan long enough to take in necessary stores, such as charcoal, flour, &c. I may mention here, for the information of travellers, that during the first month of our voyage we had used only the bread of the country, which was often very indifferent; but, on entering Nubia, we could no longer obtain even this, and Mahmoud thenceforth made Arab cakes for us of flour and water, which he baked upon a flat piece of iron;

this we found so excellent and so wholesome, that we used nothing else till we reached Cairo.

Our crew also laid in little stores of merchandize, for presents or for profit, of the Nubian articles most prized in Egypt. The premiums and prizes for work which we had given them from time to time enabled them to do this; and our boat became heavily laden with the dates of the Ibreehmee and other luxuries.

We found a steamer belonging to the Pasha at Assouan, which he had sent so far with Prince Albert of Prussia, who was now visiting Nubia, and we had here the luxury of reading some newspapers two months old, which were to us as precious as when they lie on our breakfast-tables in London, still reeking from the press, and containing all the news which only started into existence a few hours before.

Bacheet and another inhabitant of these parts had obtained leave of absence from Philœ, and we now set forward on our Egyptian voyage with a diminished crew. We stopped about midnight to take in the absent men under a grove of the best date-trees in Egypt. It was bright moonlight, and we found our excellent pilot waiting for us, surrounded by his family. It was interesting to observe the affectionate partings of these poor people, and the old father held up his hands to bless his son, remaining in that attitude till our boat glided out of sight. We offered fifty piastres to the crew if they took us to Esneh by the following evening, and they accomplished the undertaking, having been thirty hours at the oars without a moment's respite, except for meals, and while we were visiting Koum Ombos and the quarries of Hadjar Silsili.

The former is a noble relic of other times, and has still visible the tank wherein the sacred crocodile bathed, and the brick terrace on which he took his daily promenade. These Ombites were worshippers of this fishy beast; a record survives of one of them, who was taken prisoner by the crocodile-haters of Dendera, and handed over by them, in a spirit of controversial irony, to his gods. It is unnecessary to add that these carnivorous deities conferred immediate immortality on their luckless worshipper. The quarries of Hadjar Silsili afforded material for many of the cities along the Nile, and they now present an extraordinary appearance; hollowed out of the solid rock, there are squares as large as that of St. James's; streets as large as Pall Mall; and lanes and alleys without number; in short, you have here all the negative features of a town, if I may so speak; *i.e.*, if a town be considered as a *cameo*, these quarries are one vast *intaglio*.

One of our chameleons died here of cold, the thermometer having *fallen* to 85° in the shade; and his companion looked as if we were going too far with the experiment, as to whether they feed on air. It was not for want of food, however; for our cabin all day was in a haze of flies, and at night they lay in thick, black masses along all the cornices, encrusting them like moss. We had tried many devices to banish this plague by poison and smothering, but all the arts of a Brinvilliers would not induce them to touch the former, and they were too much accustomed to heat and stench to mind the latter. At length we circumvented them by a very simple means. As soon as they were settled for the night, a pan of charcoal was slowly moved round beneath them, till, stupefied by the fumes of carbonic gas, they yielded up their lives to science, and fell, in a hissing hail, upon the burning coals. This sounds cruel, but we calculated on their being suffocated previously to their being grilled; and the torments that they made us suffer during the day rendered us, I fear, somewhat indifferent to their feelings at night.

We found, on awaking the day after leaving Assouan, that we had passed Edfou in the night-time, and (shall I confess it?) we were rather glad than otherwise. By this time, we had been so be-templed and be-ruined, that we looked on a city of the Pharaohs with as much indifference as on a club-house in Pall Mall, and read the glowing eulogies of antiquaries as unmovedly as if they were puffs of some "noble residence" by George Robins. This is a bold, perhaps a rash, confession: but, as these volumes are a faithful record of impressions, I give them as they come, without selecting only the romantic, or even the creditable.

On our arrival at Esneh, we found it in the possession of a regiment of ferocious Arnaouts, who carry terror and oppression wherever they appear. These soldiers, having done their work in Syria, proved rather too troublesome even for the Pasha's authority, and were now under orders for the interior, with the intention that they should never return. They knew that they were doomed men, and this consciousness increased their habitual ferocity. When we approached the town, we found a fleet of candjiahs moored to the shore, and numbers of the soldiery amusing themselves, nominally with shooting at pigeons, but, in reality, at any boat that ventured up or down the stream. Our flag protected us for the present, so we moored below the town, and entered the town well armed. That morning these ruffians had murdered an uncomplying woman in the open street; and the corpses of her husband and brother, who had ventured to

interfere, were still lying on the steaming ground. The friends of the slain appealed to the governor, who remonstrated with the colonel of those brigands. His only reply was, "What would you have? it is time of war, and the poor fellows must be allowed to amuse themselves."

These "poor fellows," as their well-matched leader called them, are little more than a band of robbers, whom the Pasha keeps in his service, as butchers do a ferocious dog, to let loose when they want to worry. They are nominally Albanians, but every man of any nation, who has so becrimed himself as to have no country of his own, joins their desperate ranks, and assumes the white kilt and red cap that distinguish them. They were the most atrocious-looking band I ever beheld; the Spanish chapelgorri, the Italian brigand, the Irish landlord-killer, are all quakers compared with the meekest of this fierce corps. They differed widely from each other in colour, feature, and dress; the only uniformity observable among them consisting in their arms, their kilts, and their lost, wild, reckless look.

We first visited the market and bazaars; the former was crowded with this fierce soldiery, drinking, singing, quarrelling, and firing off their bullets at random. Some were kissing each other with maudlin affection, some grasping each other's throats with curses, and one party was employed in slaughtering a huge ram, in whose blood they spattered themselves, and seemed to delight in his dying struggles. A few timid citizens hurried by, but no women or children were to be seen.

As we passed through the market-place on our way to the bazaar where we heard the governor was to be found, R. rather unguardedly pointed out to me one ruffian of conspicuously atrocious aspect. The fellow observed the action, and, with his hand upon his knife, drew close to us, and dogged our steps through the crowd, in which he well knew he would find safety and impunity for any atrocity. Wherever we went, he followed us, and we could sometimes even hear his breath hissing between his ground teeth. I kept my eye on him, and my hand on my pistol; and thus we three moved on through street and alley, till we came to a shop where the Turkish governor was sitting on the counter, keeping shop for a friend, who was absent. He received us very kindly, and ordered pipes to be brought, as we took our seats by his side on the counter. The Arnaout still stood by the side of R., almost bending over him, and the governor whispered that he could not speak to us freely in his presence. We sat for some time enjoying our pipes, and watching the Arnaout with unwinking eyes, and finger on trigger. The governor observed the proceeding, and whispered, "We are in their hands, but consequences are in the hands of Allah." This state of things was too exciting to be pleasant: the moment that Arnaout's knife left its sheath, he would have had a bullet in his brain; then quick vengeance must have followed, and the governor knew well that he would not have survived his infidel friends. He soon rose, left the shop, which appeared to have little custom, to take care of itself, and invited us to accompany him to his house. We went, still followed by the Arnaout; and, when I observed to the governor that we could very well dispense with his attendance, he only shrugged his shoulders, and we re-entered the market-place. Here there was a regular row. Albanians were sprawling and struggling about in all directions, very drunk and dirty. Yataghans and the deadlier knife were at full play, and the scene was too attractive for our faithful dodger, who abandoned us to join the fray.

When seated in the governor's mud-built house, on a divan, consisting of a carpet-covered door, placed on some logs of wood, our entertainer opened his full heart to us. He said he was in hourly fear that these troops would burn the town, and massacre him to get at his harem. Two days before their arrival, he had received orders to send the Almé with a strong escort into the desert, for fear the Arnaouts should make them a cause of quarrel. He told us that the officers had been so enraged on finding the beautiful Sophia—the Essler of the Egyptian ballet—gone, that they burned her house to the ground, and destroyed all her property; "Allah knows," he added, "whether they may not treat me in the same manner." I could not help smiling at the comparison between Sophia and himself.

The unhappy governor then conjured us to depart immediately, as he could not answer for our lives, and to wait a day or two in the neighbourhood, when he hoped we would return, and give him our company to a "ball," where we should meet Sophia. He added that the Arnaouts were only waiting for their general to arrive, when they would depart for Darfur, their ultimate destination, whose climate and whose wars it was hoped would deliver the country from such scourges.

We proceeded, after our visit, to inspect what is called the Temple, but what is, in fact, only a noble portico, consisting of twenty-four beautifully sculptured columns of thirty-six feet in height, supporting a ponderous roof equally rich in sculpture and hieroglyphics.

This portico stands in the centre of the town, whose streets are on a level with its roof. We walked out of a labyrinth of mud lanes into one of the finest specimens of architecture in the world. If the difference between the ancient and modern races be as great as that between their respective edifices, then the former must have indeed been the giants that the legends of the land would make them. We looked down, as from the roof, into the temple. The faint light that struggled in from one or two crevices favoured the effect of this magnificent edifice, by leaving a gloom among the shadowy columns that became them well. The walls, as well as these columns, are covered with very spirited figures in twenty compartments, on each side: each compartment, or medallion, is four feet in height, and five in breadth. A rich bordering ran between every square, which contained three figures as large as life; in every instance, the subject was two priests presenting offerings to a throned deity. Above these tableaux, a very finely-wrought entablature connected them with the roof. In one of the walls was a portal, which led to the temple, but is now closed; in another, a deep well, which leads nowhere. This temple is carefully locked up, not for the sake of its antiquities, but because the Pasha, having excavated it for a corn dépôt, has set his seal upon it. As we left it, there were two young Arnaouts thundering at the door, and, as they threatened to break it open and shoot the porter, they were of course admitted.

On leaving the town, we found a large party of these "free companions" seated round a camp-fire, shouting, singing, smoking, and discharging fire-arms, whose bullets whistled about us freely. They were trying if the "infidels" would wince, which, if we had been less indignant, no doubt we should have done.

There was something very picturesque, after all, about these ruffians, and I could not help lingering to contemplate this picture of human nature in its fearfullest form. Their lives are one succession of the wildest excitement, yet over all lay, perhaps unconsciously, the influence of that discipline, such as it was, that was now sending them unresistedly to encounter pestilence and privation in the depths of Africa. There were some very youthful, and even noble, countenances among their crew, and their dress is the most picturesque possible. A red tarboosh, with a purple silk tassel, covers their long flowing locks that stream down their shoulders like those of the Cavaliers; an embroidered jacket of scarlet, or dark blue; a very voluminous white kilt, reaching to the knee; greaves, a sort of embroidered gaiters, upon their legs, and red slippers, constitute their dress. A brace of long pistols and a dagger are stuck in a large silken sash that girds their bodies; a long silver-mounted musket is slung at their backs, and a curved sabre at their side. They have by-laws peculiar to their regiment, and they frequently shoot their officers, electing others in their stead; when they go so far as to shoot their colonel, Mehemet Ali decimates them, and gives them worse and more stern commanders; this having happened once or twice, they left off the practice. It may be supposed that troops like these are little adapted for garrison duty; and it was in consequence of their lawlessness, and the complaints made against them by Europeans, that Mehemet Ali had sent them away to die.

When we reached our boat, we found all the crew, generally so anxious to rush into every town, cowering under the decks. We sailed at sunset, and shall never see the Esnéan Sophia! As, however, we saw numerous Almé elsewhere, I may as well introduce some account of them here.

The term *Almé*, or, in the plural, *Awâlim*, means literally "a learned female." This epithet is only strictly applicable to the singing women, whose music is sometimes of a very high order, and their accomplishments in other respects so numerous, that they frequently obtain fifty guineas from a party for their exhibitions on one evening. The dancing girls belong to a very inferior order, and are termed *Gawâzee* in the language of the country. These women used to have a settlement near Cairo, and attended all the marriage and other festivities of the beau monde there. The Moollahs, or Moslem divines, however, objected to them; not on account of their impropriety, but on the plea that the profane eyes of the "Infidel" ought not to gaze upon women of the true faith. There was such an agitation raised on this subject, that the priests prevailed, and all the Almé were sent off to Esneh, five hundred miles up the river, by way of banishment, where they are allowed a small stipend by government to keep them from starvation. The result of this reformation produced frightful results, which I cannot allude to here, and Alméism still flourishes everywhere outside of the Cairene districts.

Sophia is said to be the leader of this tribe, who have laws, finance regulations, and peculiar blood among themselves, like the Gipsies. She was for some time in Abbas Pasha's hareem, whence she escaped, and, after many romantic vicissitudes, obtained immunity and freedom from Mehemet Ali. She is now twenty-five years old, which is equivalent to at least fifty in our country, yet

she preserves her beauty of face and form almost undiminished, and even her agility and grace.

The dance is the same with which their predecessors entertained the Pharaohs four thousand years ago, and almost every attitude we see here now is found upon the ancient tombs. It is an exercise rather of posture and acting, than of agility, and requires long practice and considerable art to arrive at perfection. The dress of the Almé is very picturesque and graceful, consisting of a short embroidered jacket fitting close, but open in the front, long loose trousers of almost transparent silk, a cachemire shawl, wrapped round the loins, rather than the waist; and light elegant turbans of muslin, embroidered with gold. Their hair flows in dark curls down their shoulders, and glitters with small gold coins; their eyes are deeply but delicately painted with kohl, which gives them a very languishing expression, and a profusion of showy ornaments glitters on their unveiled bosoms.

When about to commence the Oriental ballet, the Almé exchanges this for a yet lighter dress, throws off her slippers, and advances to the centre of the room with a slow step and undulating form, that keep accurate time to the music of the reed-pipe and the castanets, on which she is accompanied by her attendants. She then, after a glance round upon her audience, throws herself at once and entirely into the part she intends to act; be it pensive, gay, or tragic, she seems to know no feeling but that of the passion she represents. In some cases, a whole romance is acted; an Arab girl, for instance, she listens at the door of her tent for the sound of her lover's horse, she chides his delay; he comes, she expresses her delight; he sinks to sleep, she watches over, and dances round him; he departs, she is overwhelmed with grief. Generally, the representation is more simple; the "Wasp dance" is a favourite ballet of the latter class: the actress is standing musing in a pensive posture, when a wasp is supposed to fly into her bosom—her girdle—all about her; the music becomes rapid; she flies about in terror, darting her hand all over her person in pursuit of the insect, till she finds it was all a mistake; then smiling, she expresses her pleasure and her relief in dance.

These dances are certainly not adapted for public exhibition in England, and would be considered as too expressive even at the Opera; but they display exquisite art in their fashion, and surprise, if they do not please, the most fastidious critic of the coulisses.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### THEBES.

Then came they forth, from that which now might seem
A gorgeous grave; through portals sculptured deep,
With imagery beautiful as dreams,
They went, and left the shades which tend on sleep,
Over its unregarded dead to keep
Their silent watch. . . .
Then there came temples, such as mortal hand
Has never built; nor ecstasy, nor dream,
Reared in the cities of enchanted land.
*Revolt of Islam*—SHELLEY.

We had scarcely reached our boat when we saw the governor coming after us; he entreated us to drop down the river to a little distance, and then resigned himself to the delights of his pipe and our Maraschino. He said the English were the most ingenious people in the world to make such liquor (which, he thought, was brewed in London like Double X), and that the people who built Thebes were fools compared to the men who could make a drink like this. He stayed with us for about an hour, to our great inconvenience; and then departed with a bottle in his janissary's hands, and another within his own capacious girdle, that made him for the time indifferent to all the Arnaouts of Albania.

We were now *en route* for mighty Thebes, and grudged even the hour that was devoted to an inspection of the beautiful temple of Herment, or Hermonthis. This was built by Cleopatra, in honour of her having given birth to Cæsarion. It is richly adorned with painting and sculpture, containing every possible illustration of the "interesting event" it commemorates. Mehemet Ali has used this beautiful building as a granary for some time; and its columns and entablatures have been forced into the more active service of life, in the shape of bridges and piers, in the same spirit in which the Pasha converted the indolent dervises into soldiers.

We moored off Gournou, on the eastern bank of the river, towards evening, leaving the opposite side, with Luxor and Carnak, for the last. We were soon in the saddle, and, preceded by an Arab guide with a long spear, went cantering over the level plains, luxuriant with corn-fields, to the Temple of Ammon, the Theban Jupiter. This building is about a mile from the river, and contained the Hall of Assembly of ancient Thebes. How curious it was, standing among those silent courts, to speculate on the species of eloquence which charmed, or persuaded the listening crowds of three thousand years ago! There was party spirit even then, no doubt, and place-hunting; where that spirit now is

who shall presume to say? but permanent places for the patriots have long since been found in the vast cemeteries that surround us. The front of this building is very perfect, and imposing, from its simplicity and vast extent. Evening fell as we stood there; obscurity, like that which wraps its records, gathered round it; and we rode back to our tent by the light of stars, which, like these remains, only served to throw a very faint light upon the subject. We were visited in the evening by a party of Irish travellers belonging to a boat which lay moored astern of ours, with whom we passed a pleasant evening.

The next morning, at daybreak, we started for the tombs of the kings. I was mounted on a fine horse belonging to the Sheikh of the village; and the cool air of the morning, the rich prospect before us, and the cloudless sky, all conspired to impart life and pleasure to our relaxed and languid frames. I had been for nearly a month confined to my pallet by illness; and now, mounted on a gallant barb, sweeping across the desert, strewn with the most wonderful ruins in the world, with the mountain breezes breathing round me, I felt a glow of spirits and exhilaration of mind and body, to which I had been long a stranger.

For a couple of hours we continued along the plain, which was partially covered with wavy corn, but flecked widely, here and there, with desert tracts. Then we entered the gloomy gorges of the mountains through which the proud Theban monarchs passed to their tombs.

Our path lay through a narrow defile, between precipitous cliffs of rubble and calcareous strata, and some large boulders of coarse conglomerate lay strewn along this desolate valley, in which no living thing of earth or air ever met our view. The plains below may have been, perhaps, once swarming with life, and covered with palaces; but the gloomy defiles we were now traversing must have been ever, as they now are, lonely, lifeless, desolate—a fit avenue to the tombs for which we were bound.

After five or six miles' travel, our guide stopped at the base of one of the precipices, and, laying his long spear against the rock, proceeded to light his torches. There was no entrance apparent at the distance of a few yards, nor was this great tomb betrayed to the outer world by any visible aperture, until discovered by Belzoni. This extraordinary man seems to have been one of the few who have hit off in life the lot for which Nature destined them. His sepulchral instincts might have been matter of envy to the ghouls, with such unerring certainty did he guess at the places containing the embalmed corpses most worthy of his "body-snatching" energies.

We descended by a steep path into this tomb, through a doorway covered with hieroglyphics, and entered a corridor, that ran some hundred yards into the mountain. It was about twenty feet square, and painted throughout most elaborately in the manner of Raphael's Loggia at the Vatican, with little inferiority of skill or colouring. The doorways were richly ornamented with figures of a larger size, and over each was the winged globe, or a huge scarabæus. In one instance we found a winged serpent, wearing an apron beautifully painted!

Indeed, probably in allusion to the wanderings of the freed spirit, almost all the larger emblems wore wings, however incompatible with their usual vocations; boats, globes, fishes, and suns, all were winged. On one of the corridors there is an allegory of the progress of the sun through the hours, painted with great detail. The God of Day sits in a boat (in compliment to the Nile he lays aside his chariot here), and steers through the hours of day and night, each of the latter being distinguished by a star. The Nile in this, as in all other circumstances of Egyptian life, figures as the most important element; even the blessed souls, for its sake, assume the form of fishes, and swim about with angelic fins in this river of life.

One gorgeous passage makes way into another more gorgeous still, until you arrive at a steep descent. At the base of this, perhaps four hundred feet from daylight, a doorway opens into a vaulted hall of noble proportions, the gloom of which considerably increases its real size. Here the body of Osirei, father of Rameses the Second, was laid about 3200 years ago in the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus, which Belzoni drew from hence as a reward of his enterprise.* Its poor occupant, who had taken such pains to hide himself, was "undone" for the amusement of a London conversazione.

In Bruce's tomb we found paintings and excavations of a similar design; and in one of the numerous chambers, opening off the long passages, we saw the two celebrated figures that have given this the name of the "Harper's Tomb." In these there is a great deal of life, though the bodies are a mere bag; but the countenance is full of expression, and the bending arm seems to sweep the strings as gracefully in this lonely tomb of three thousand years ago as in the gilded saloons of our present day.

There are numerous other tombs all full of interest; but, as the reader, who is inte-

* The British Museum, it is said, offered him £12,000 for it. It is now in Sir John Soane's Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

rested in such things, will consult higher authorities than mine, I shall only add, that the whole circumstance of ancient Egyptian life, with all its vicissitudes, may be read in pictures out of these extraordinary tombs, from the birth, through all the joys and sorrows of life, to the death; the lamentation over the corpse, the embalmer's operations, and, finally, the judgment and the immortality of the soul. In one instance, the Judge is measuring all man's good actions in a balance, against a feather from an angel's wing; in another, a great serpent is being bound, head and foot, and cast into a pit; and there are many other proofs, equally convincing, of the knowledge that this mysterious people possessed of a future life and judgment.*

It was a merry day we passed among those tombs; we had not heard the sound of any European voice but our own for nearly two months, when, turning into one of these sepulchres, we met a large party exploring like ourselves. We invited them to "our tomb," where Mahmoud was preparing coffee, and, as their commissariat had been neglected, they were too happy to be our guests. Mahmoud was startled at first at the unexpected increase of our party, but soon set himself vigorously about preparing dinner for nine out of a luncheon for two. Our new acquaintances consisted of a handsome young Russian Prince, an antiquary who was residing at Thebes named Castellari, a German traveller, two Italians, and two Frenchmen.

Our servants had already made things comfortable in the charnel-house; a fire was lighted, carpets spread, and coffee was already diffusing its fragrance. Prince K.'s wolf-skin, added to our carpets, afforded sitting room for the whole party, who now gathered round in a circle, comparing their various impressions in as many different languages; German, French, Russian, Italian, Arabic, and English Babelled our sentiments in that singular conversazione.

The noonday sun now kept the outward world to himself, while the tomb afforded us its friendly shelter before our time: many a pipe smoked incense to the spirits of the departed kings, whose unconscious hospitality we were sharing in common with the bat, the scorpion, and the worm.

About two o'clock our party broke up, and, notwithstanding threats of coup de soleil and brain fever, we set out once more on our adventures across the mountains. The sun was scorching hot, and his rays, reflected from the calcareous cliffs, poured down as in a focus upon our heads, while the hills excluded every breath of air. Nothing but the turban can stand this sort of sun-artillery with impunity; and our guides added to the defence which this afforded, cloaks, carpets, and whatever they could wrap round them.

As we descended a steep path that would have puzzled a European goat, my horse put his foot on the breast of a mummy king, not recognizing its humanity; and this once cherished corpse was trodden into fragments by the rest of the party.

What a story that ghastly royal visage told of ambition, and fallen power, and its vanity! A Pharaoh affording footing to an Arab horse, and trampled on by a stranger from the far north! "Is this the man that made the earth tremble, that did shake kingdoms?—that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, and opened not the house of his prisoners?"

"Is thy pride brought down to the grave, and the sound of thy viols? Is the earth spread under thee, and doth the earthworm cover thee?"*

As we emerged from the mountains, we came in sight of a vast plain, intersected by the Nile, and extending as far as the Arabian hills, a distance of about twenty miles. This plain was strewed with ruins of extinct cities and temples, appropriately intermingled with extensive cemeteries, wherein now slept quietly their once busy populations.

Every one has heard of Thebes, but I suspect very few have any distinct impressions on the subject; and when, in reading some traveller's journal, they think that they have arrived at this long sought-for city, they find themselves lost in accounts of Carnak, Luxor, Gournou, &c., but no Thebes. Now I am free to confess that, after having twice visited these localities, I am myself yet ignorant of the site of this renowned Thebes, unless it be a little mud village, with which the environs of Luxor are bespattered. The epithet is, in fact, a noun of multitude singular, embracing at least five different localities, once, probably, forming part of the same great city.

As we look down from these mountains we discern, on our far right, the palace of Medinet Abou; before us, the Memnonium; on our left the temples of Gournou. Advanced some distance in front of these, stand, like videttes, the colossal statues of Shamy and Damy, or, the vocal Memnon and his brother idol. Then a wide green plain, beyond which flows the Nile; and, farther still, on the Arabian side, Luxor raises its gigantic columns from the river's edge, and the propylæa of Carnak tower afar off. This view scarcely embraces THEBES.

* I must again refer the reader to Lord Lindsay's Letters, as the most interesting account of these tombs, as Sir G. Wilkinson's is the most precise.

* Isaiah c. xiv.

Descending from the mountains, we traversed the plain, which is everywhere excavated in search of antiquities, found here in such quantities that the Pasha has imposed a tax of 3,500 piastres a year on this subterranean harvest. Herds of wild dogs house themselves in these excavations, and, as the stranger passes by, a thousand gaunt, wolfish-looking heads start out from their burrows, till the plain looks mottled with them, and a hungry howl runs along the ground for miles.

We rode straight to Medinet Abou, which alone would make the fame of any other locality; but Carnak eclipses all other wonders here, and seems to rule alone.

This palace, however, is very grand in architecture, and gorgeous with painting. It is very perfect, too, and a considerable number of chambers are uninjured, even in the second story. Its labyrinth of immense courts, magnificently decorated, the innumerable pillars that everywhere rear their richly-carved capitals, with or without cornices; the superb colonnades that surround the courts, all convey an idea of grandeur, before which every human creation, except Carnak, dwarfs into insignificance. Many of these columns lie strewn about in such profusion, that Aladdin's genii might have despaired of imitating them, yet they measure six-and-thirty feet in circumference, and gleam like a cathedral's painted window with every colour in the rainbow, as bright and vivid as if the sun shone through them.*

It was late when we returned to our tents, after fourteen hours' exposure to the powerful sun of the Thebaid. The Prince's boat was just putting off, with a parting salute, as we dismounted. By the time the last echo of our return guns had died away among the mountains, I was asleep. When the lamps and supper came from the boat, I found the tent was literally swarming with hideous insects; winged centipedes, horned dragon-flies, monstrous ants, livid-looking beetles, moths, and locusts, were crawling, as if *the* butterfly had given her celebrated ball upon my cloak. They had probably been attracted by the smell of the mummies and their cerements that lay strewn about the tent.

When at last I fell asleep, I was suddenly awakened by the cold slimy pat of a bull-frog falling on my cheek. Such are some of the consequences of sleeping amongst Pharaohs.

The next morning we started before sunrise to watch the effects of the first smile of Aurora upon her son Memnon; he has long ceased to greet her coming with a song, but still, for tradition's sake, we wished to see the meeting. The brief twilight left us little time for a gallop of three miles, so we flung ourselves into the Turkish saddles, without waiting to change them for our own; and passing by the pillared masses of the temple of Ammon, just visible through the morning mist, we stood under Memnon's colossal pedestal before the last stars had melted in the dawn. Alas! for the vanity of human plans and early rising, this was the only morning since we entered Egypt on which the sun refused to shine. Memnon himself would have been puzzled, in his best days, to tell the moment when he rose.

There are two statues here, of similar size and proportion, about twenty yards apart. They stand isolated at present, though once forming the commencement of an avenue of statues leading to a palace, now level with the sands. The most celebrated of these two statues stands to the North; he is hewn out of a single mass of granite, and measures, though seated, about fifty feet in height, exclusive of his pedestal, which measures six feet more. His companion's figure and proportions are a facsimile of his own, but I think the rock of which the latter is formed is of sandstone. The granite of which Memnon is composed has a musical ring when struck, and it is said that the priests used to produce the sounds which astonished travellers in ancient times.

Humboldt, however, in his South American travels, speaks of certain rocks on the river Orinoco, called by the natives "loxas musicas," which *he* heard yielding low thrilling tones of music, and accounted for it by the wind passing through the chinks, and agitating the spangles of mica into audible vibration.

Whatever Memnon may formerly have done in the vocal line, much voice can scarcely be expected from him now, as his chest is gone, and replaced by loose stones. He fell down in the year 70 B.C., and was afterwards rebuilt. His pedestal is covered with Greek and other inscriptions, bearing testimony to his musical performances; one of these records the visit of Adrian and his queen Sabina.

This Memnon is a corruption of Miamun, the beloved of Jove, and, in hieroglyphic history, is called Amunoph the third; he reigned one hundred years before Sesostris, or 1430 B.C. His colleague was probably the Danaus, who led a colony into Greece, and founded the kingdom of Argos.

From these statues to the Memnonium, as the palace and temple of Sesostris are called, is about half a mile. The magnificent hall of this temple is entered between two calm

* A large colony of Christians was established here, and celebrated their worship in the great court, having covered the idols with mud. They fled before the Arab invaders, but ruins of their towns still remain.

and contented-looking giants of rock, each twenty feet high. Within this hall was the library! The ceiling is covered with astronomical figures, which reveal the date of the building, 1322 B.C. On one of the walls, Sesostris is represented as seated under the shadow of the Tree of Life, while gods inscribe his name upon its leaves. It is impossible to convey any idea of the extent and variety of all these ruins, or of the profusion of sculpture and painting which everywhere adorns them.

A statue of Sesostris lies without the temple, in the position which he has occupied unmoved since Cambyses overthrew him. The upper part of his body is broken into two or three vast fragments, and the lower is almost indistinguishable in its brokenness. The breadth of this enormous figure across the breast is twenty-three feet; the whole was cut from a single block of granite, and polished as smooth as marble.

These are the principal objects of interest on the Libyan side of the river; there are many others, which, however they may attract the traveller, would scarcely interest the reader. The valley of the Tombs of the Queens (who even in death preserved their propriety, by lying apart from the coarser sex); the grottoes of Koornat Murraee; and the temple (afterwards the church) of Dayr el Bahree—tell enough of their own stories in their names for our purpose.

On returning to our boat, a curious rencontre took place on board a dahabieh that was conveying a lion from Abyssinia to the Pasha's menagerie at Cairo. Mr. M.'s servant had purchased a wild fox from one of the natives, and, being anxious to see if the lion would devour him, he threw him into the cage: Reynard was game, however, put his bristles up, showed his teeth, and threatened hostilities; the lion howled with affright, and made such efforts to escape, that he very nearly upset the boat, to the great ire of the Rais, whose life might have paid forfeit for his prisoner's loss. He began to curse all the foxes and Christians under the sun, together with their beards and those of their fathers: the gallant assailant was rescued and restored to liberty. We struck our tent, and, proceeding to Luxor, found Prince Albert's steamer, bearing the royal standard of Prussia, to which we fired a salute, returned on their part, by two guns.

Of Luxor I shall only observe that it forms a fitting approach to Carnak. It presents a splendid confusion of courts, columns, statues, ruins, and a lonely obelisk, whose companion was removed to Paris, and now flourishes on the "Place de la Concorde."

We found here the luxury of Arab horses, and rode along a wide plain covered with coarse grass, and varied by some gloomy little lakes and acacia shrubs, when, at the end of an hour, our guide reined in his horse, and pointed with his spear towards the south. There lay Carnak! darkening a whole horizon with its portals, and pyramids, and palaces. We passed under a noble archway, and entered a long avenue of sphinxes. All their heads were broken off, but their pedestals remained unmoved since the time of Joseph. It must have been a noble sight in the palmy days of Thebes—that avenue of two hundred enormous statues, terminated by that temple. Yet this was only one of many. At least eight others, with similar porticoes and archways, led from this stupendous edifice. We rode through half a mile of sphinxes, and then arrived at the temple, the splendour of which no words can describe.

A glorious portal opened into a vast court, crowded with a perfect forest of the most magnificent columns, thirty-six feet each in circumference, covered with hieroglyphics, and surmounted by capitals, all of different patterns, and richly painted. No two persons agree on the number of these apparently countless columns: some make it amount to 134, others, 160: the central measure 66 feet in height, exclusive of the pedestals and abacus. Endless it would be to enter into details of this marvellous pile: suffice it to say, that the temple is about one mile and three quarters in circumference, the walls 80 feet high, and 25 feet thick.

With astonishment, and almost with awe, I rode on through labyrinths of courts, cloisters, and chambers, and only dismounted where a mass of masonry had lately fallen in, owing to its pillars having been removed to build the Pasha's powder manufactory. Among the infinite variety of objects of art that crowd this temple, the obelisks are not the least interesting. Those who have only seen them at Rome, or Paris, can form no conception of their effect where all around is in keeping with them. The eye follows upward the finely tapering shaft, till suddenly it seems, not to terminate, but to melt away, and lose itself in the dazzling sunshine of its native skies.

For hours I wandered eagerly and anxiously on, through apparently interminable variety, every moment encountering something new, unheard of, and unthought of, until then. The very walls of outer enclosures were deeply sculptured with whole histories of great wars and triumphs, by figures that seemed to live again. In some places, these walls were poured down like an avalanche, not fallen: no mortar had been ever needed to connect the cliff-like masses of which they were composed: at this hour, the most ignorant mason might direct the replacing of

every stone where it once towered, in propylon or gateway, so accurately was each fitted to the place which it was to occupy.

We rested for a long time on a fallen column, under a beautiful archway that commands a wide view of the Temple, and then slowly and lingeringly withdrew. The world contains nothing like it.

We returned to Luxor by a different, yet similar, avenue of statues to that which we had approached. As we proceeded, we could discover other pillars and portals far away upon the horizon, each marking where an entrance to this amazing Temple once existed.

From the desert or the river; from within, or from without; by day, or by moonlight; however you contemplate Carnak, appears the very aspect in which it shows to most advantage. And when this was all perfect; when its avenues opened in vista upon the noble temples and palaces of Sesostris, upon Gournou, Medinet Abou, and Luxor; when its courts were paced by gorgeous priestly pageants, and busy life swarmed on the river flowing between banks of palaces like those of Venice magnified a hundredfold—when all this was in its prime, no wonder that its fame spread over the barbarian world, and found immortality in Homer's song.*

For many a day after I had seen it, and even to this hour, glimpses of Thebes mingle with my reveries, and blend themselves with dreams, as if that vision had daguerreotyped itself upon the brain, and would remain there for ever.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### DENDERA TO CAIRO.

To glide adown old Nilus, where he threads
Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads,
Like a calm flock of silver-fleecèd sheep,
His waters on the plain; and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

*Witch of Atlas.*—SHELLEY.

WE sailed away from Thebes one balmy evening, and soon the only testimony of its existence was in our memories, and in a young jackal, one of our exportations thence, which now, true to its instinct, began a series of mournful howlings, continued without intermission throughout the night.

Our crew, who had hitherto been paid extra for almost every day's work, began to wax very indolent when they had no longer the stimulus of bribery to induce exertion. We at first remonstrated with them, but in vain; we then insisted on leaving the worst of them behind us; and thereupon the remainder, with the exception of the pilot, broke out into regular mutiny. We had only ourselves to depend upon, as Mahmoud had taken fright, and Abdallah was a mere negation. We were in the loneliest part of the river, and far from any authority to which we could appeal; so that we were reduced to the unpleasant necessity of taking the law into our own hands. The men rested on their oars, and refused to move; the rais affected not to hear; and Mahmoud said we must make the best terms we could come to: so, while R. stood garrison at our cabin fortress, I jumped forward among the crew, and, with the hippopotamus-thong whip, soon restored the rais to his hearing, and the crew to motion. Some took to their oars, others jumped up, and seemed inclined to show fight; but the eloquent mouth of our pistols dissuaded them, and added weight to an injunction to row if they valued their lives. This restored discipline at once, and they pulled with such hearty good-will that we reached Dendera that evening.

On arriving there, we left the boat, to visit the temple, telling the rais he might sail away, if he dared; and then, leaving no firearms behind us, we started across a jungle-covered plain for the famous ruins that vindicated their sacred character by inducing the Indian troops under Sir David Baird to kneel down and pray before them.

As, after bright sunshine, it is some time before our eyes recover their perception of objects in the shade, so, after Carnak, all other buildings appear divested of interest and grandeur, until our bigotry for the former subsides. Thus we found at Dendera, that though its appearance at any other time would have struck us as magnificent, demands on the sublime had been rendered so unconscionable by Carnak, that we could not appreciate this beautiful temple as it deserved. It is pronounced by critics to afford a lamentable proof of the decadence of architectural art under the Ptolemies; but to the mere eye of curiosity its appearance is very majestic and imposing, and nothing can be more rich than the carvings and hieroglyphics that adorn the massive pillars crowned with heads of Isis. The ceilings are covered with the celebrated astronomical paintings; and the next most popular representation throughout this edifice seems to be that of serpents; which appear in every variety of form and attitude: some are walking on human legs, some spinning erect upon their tails like corkscrews,

* "Thebes is called Hecatomopylon" in the Iliad, which is taken to involve a wall all round it; but "pylon" should probably be taken for the gateways of the temples, which would therefore render it "Thebes, of the hundred porches."

while they present strange offerings to deities equally preposterous.

We crawled upon our hands and knees through many dark passages, and emerged upon a terrace commanding a noble view. When the priests of old stood here, and looked upon that wide realm over which they held such unlimited influence, how little did they think of the coming time, when their faith should be forgotten, or derided; and strangers, from a land unknown in their estimation of the world, should stand there alone!

The solitude all round us was profound: the sudden arrest of cultivation, when bordering the desert, was curious; for there the high corn waved, and here the sands spread up to its very roots like a lake; far away, the Nile glistened under the setting sun; and beyond, rose the smoke of Keneh, and the chain of hills that reaches to the shores of the Red Sea.

It was dark when we reached our boat. We found the rais and the crew very penitent, and entreating pardon for Asgalani, the man whom we had expelled. We thought it necessary, however, to be firm, and pushed across to Keneh. Here, after some time, the rais informed us that two men had deserted, and the rest of the crew appeared more mutinous than ever, relying on our evident reluctance to punish them. We made no reply to the rais, but went to bed, keeping watch alternately, and at daylight I prepared to go to Keneh, to visit the Governor. The moment this intention was known, the rais came to implore for pardon, assuring us he would get the two best men in Egypt instead of those who had deserted, and that he and the crew would lay down their lives for us.

We took no notice of this application; and, while R. kept garrison, I proceeded to Keneh. I went first to visit our Vice-Consul, a fine old Arab, named Seid Hassan, who received me with great hospitality and kindness, and immediately despatched a guard of soldiers in search of the deserters. He then ordered his donkey, and accompanied me back to the river, a distance of two miles.

When we arrived, we found the crew in great apprehension, and the rais came humbly forward to put my hand upon his head. Seid Hassan insisted on having him bastinadoed, and all the rest of the crew discharged on the spot, being first bastinadoed, and made to refund all the wages that had been paid in advance. It was with reluctance that we left the poor fellows in suspense; but we had yet four hundred miles to travel, and it was necessary to make an impression on them; so we welcomed the Consul on board, and he took his place on our divan with as much ceremony as a chancellor might upon a woolsack. His son, the British Consular agent at Cosseir, soon followed with his suite; and, the Captain of the Port arriving with his retainers, our cabin and decks were quite full. Besides this party, a number of Turks and Egyptians were seated in a semicircle on the banks, smoking, of course; and looking gravely on at our proceedings.

While coffee and pipes were being served to our guests, a present from Seid Hassan arrived, in the shape of a fat sheep and a large basket of bread. We made the kind old Arab and the rest of our guests such presents as we could afford out of our remaining stock, and then proceeded to business. Each of the authorities in council recommended severer measures than the other, while the poor trembling crew looked on, and listened with starting eyes for their final doom. We told Seid Hassan that we had only applied to him to show that our cause was a just one; that we had no wish to have any punishment inflicted on the crew, except as a warning to others that they might not consider travellers could be imposed upon with impunity while such men as Seid Hassan had the power and the will to see justice done; and that, in short, we would forgive them all for the present, and inflict summary justice ourselves, if any symptoms of insubordination reappeared.

The Consul applauded our clemency, but condemned its exercise in this instance as weakness. He declared he would never rest until he had found the deserters, and that he would make an example of them: "on his head be it." The rais now came forward with two able recruits, and paid them, in our presence, their wages to Cairo: the crew jumped about for joy, and tried to get at our hands to kiss; and Bacheet, our faithful pilot, looked as pleased and proud as if he had been made an admiral.

We now parted from our Keneh friends, with mutual professions of unbounded respect, and darted away, as rapidly as oars could drive us; nor, from that day forward, had we the slightest cause of complaint to find with our crew. These people are unfortunately so little accustomed to kindness or consideration, that they invariably look upon it as a sign of weakness; which their dastardly nature will always incline them to take advantage of.

We pulled away merrily until a gale of wind compelled us to moor near the village of Regia, the inhabitants of which have obtained the contemptuous appellation of "God help us Arabs!" from the following circumstance. The village sheikh had married and taken to his hareem a young wife

the betrothed of a sailor of Siout. The injured lover, arriving at the village soon afterwards, sent a friend to the sheikh's house to say there was a woman dangerously ill on board his boat, who stood very much in need of assistance. The sheikh's young wife hereupon went on board, where she found that the only person who required her attendance was her discarded lover: by him she was borne instantly away in sight of all the villagers, who had assembled on the shore when they heard of the deceit. There they stood, hurling stones and curses after the fugitives, and adopting no further measures beyond shrieks of "God help us!" This appellation they have borne ever since, and are registered by it in the conscription lists.

The next day we reached Bellini, the starting-point for Abydus, where stands the temple of Sesostris, which I have described in ascending the river. There was a small garrison of cavalry here, with handsome, serviceable-looking horses. There was also a settlement of Almé. We saw herds of buffaloes in the river, that seemed to be playing at hippopotamus, keeping only their noses above the water.

During several following days we killed a great number of quails and a jackal, which I speared in his mountain den. Our remaining chameleon and the little jackal died of the cold, which sometimes even we felt very severely in contrast to the weather within the Tropics.

Arrived at Manfaloot, I went ashore to visit Dr. Dubray, a French physician, in the Pasha's service. It is not likely that these pages will ever reach his eyes, so that I the more willingly make mention of his kindness and disinterested offices. He had charge of a regiment of Egyptian cuirassiers, mustering about eight hundred strong. The horses were at grass, but the men looked tolerably well drilled and appointed.

This was a considerable town "in the time of the Mamelukes," an epoch which is made use of in this country, as "before the Union" is in Ireland, to denote a period of prosperity that never existed. The encroachments of the Nile and the taxing officers have now very much impaired the extent of Manfaloot, which does not now contain above five thousand inhabitants.

The day we left Manfaloot, we fired at a great number of crocodiles with our usual lack of success in obtaining their scalps; and, after some more days, only varied by such incidents as I have already noticed, we arrived at Cairo, exactly two months after we had started from thence.

We remained only one day at the Hotel d'Orient, by far the best in Cairo; and then removed into lodgings, where alone one can enter into the spirit of Egyptian life. At an hotel, surrounded by Europeans, one is entirely secluded from those hourly opportunities of observation so entertaining to a traveller. We had taken a friendly leave of all our crew, and presented Bacheet with a handsome present in addition to the gratuities expected by his comrades. We were much pleased by the poor fellow bringing us, in a day or two afterwards, a present of the Ibreemee dates, so prized by the Egyptians, which was all he had to offer.

We took a house to ourselves in the Soog Ezallot, or "place of the evening market." As in Parisian houses, the porter and his family occupying the ground-floor were handed over with the rest of the furniture. Having paid our rent in advance, we were then required to pay nearly as much more "for the possession of the key," which consisted of a piece of wood with some nails in it.

Our mansion contained a courtyard, in which stood a sickly-looking palm-tree, crisped by the heat, and a couple of hen-coops that wore almost as much appearance of vegetation. On the first floor were two sitting-rooms, consisting of high, vaulted chambers without doors, opening off a terrace, and two bedrooms. Above these were other rooms and terraces shaded by trellised vines. It required but a short time to take an inventory of the furniture, which was particularly simple. It consisted of one deal table and two iron bedsteads. A broad wooden bench ran round the sitting-rooms, on which we were expected to sit in state, or squat in comfort. This looked desolate enough at first; but our camp furniture, mats, carpets, and other appendages of Oriental travel, soon gave an appearance of comfort to this bleak dwelling and its forlorn walls.

And yet there was a strange air of luxury over all this. The stone floors, and white-washed walls, and curtainless windows, had always a golden glow of sunshine, or a deep, refreshing shade flung over them. The vine-leaves threw a cool, quivering shade over the marble terraces: the fragrant fumes of Latakeea mingled with the balmy air; and the coffee, which seemed to be always roasting, contributed its pleasant odour. Nubian lances, spears, and clubs, mingled with European arms, glittered on the walls; the showy carpets and wild-beast skins strewed the floor and the divans. A hyæna's hide covered a table strewn with antiquities, and our boat-flags hung round as tapestry. Chibouques, yellow and red slippers, tarbooshes, sashes, and other Orientalisms, lay strewn about, and we at least accomplished what would have been a very comfortable drawing-room for Inkle and Yarico.

A visitor (and we had numbers of all descriptions) enters; and before his feet are unslippered and tucked beneath his gown on the divan, one servant presents him with coffee, and another with the pipe: by the time the latter is finished, we are apparently on the most intimate terms. Whatever may have been in old times the prejudices against Europeans, the Cairenes are now both anxious and willing to cultivate our acquaintance, and express themselves with apparent frankness upon every subject. One soons gets tired, however, of people whose principal contribution to society is the smoke of their pipes; whose every principle (if they have any) is so opposed to our own; and whose information (if they choose to give any) is so little worth having.

There is an evident expectation in the public mind of Cairo that England must, sooner or later, take a leading part in Egyptian politics; and not only here, but all over the East, every traveller, at all capable of conversing with the natives, constantly meets the question, "When are the English coming?" It would be difficult to trace the origin of this popular impression, which certainly has not arisen from any vapouring, politically or privately, on the part of the English. There are, moreover, no Englishmen in the Pasha's service, except the superintendent of the gardens at Rhoda, and of the sugar plantations in the Saïd; but the Frenchmen abound in every department, from Suleiman Pasha * to the apothecaries' apprentices in the female surgery. It was Frenchmen who made Egypt a naval power; it was a Frenchman who organized the army that all but overthrew the empire of Constantinople; it was a Frenchman who made the magnificent docks at Alexandria; and the celebrated engineer, who controls the destinies of Egypt by means of acting upon the inundations of the Nile, is M. Linant.

So it is, however, as every traveller will bear witness: *England is expected in the East*, where, hitherto, she has never planted a standard, except in defence of the Crescent, and the integrity of its dominions. That she will ever come forward to vindicate the Cross where her best and bravest blood was shed in its defence six hundred years ago, is very problematical; however, "Gold wins its way where Angels might despair," and the interests of India may obtain what the Sepulchre of Christ has been denied.

This is, perhaps, a delicate subject, and for the present we will waive it, and proceed with our parting view of Cairo.

* Colonel Sève, a French renegade, to whom are principally owing the improved tactics, discipline, and conquests of the Egyptian troops.

This is the most decorous and dissolute metropolis that the sun shines over. The women seem all secluded in the interior of the hareem, or in the no less impenetrable garments that conceal their persons and their faces in the street; the men all wear the yet more baffling disguise of patriarchal appearance and stern formality. As you walk through these masquerading streets, among men whose thoughts appear abstracted from the earth; and women who are all veiled or in mourning, except their flashing eyes, you might imagine you beheld the people of Nineveh the day after they had repented. No Dead Sea fruit ever presented a more hypocritical exterior or a truer type. Enter into their houses, and inquire of their household gods; listen to their familiar conversation, and study the complexion of their thoughts; mark the objects of their desire, their ambition, and their zeal; and you will at once see the necessity of such strict observance of appearances to cloak the fearful tissue of sensuality and guilt that pervades the population of Egypt. In the streets there are none of the manifestations of vice too usual in European cities. In the latter, however, the moral filth is confined, principally at least, to sewers, which, foul as they may be, are only partial. But in Cairo the whole city is so inundated with uncleanness that these sewers are indistinguishable, and it would seem that nothing but the ocean that now wraps the Cities of the Plain could ever purify its polluted precincts.

But to return to more agreeable subjects. Cairo affords to the traveller and the student many sources of entertainment and information. There is an excellent library, liberally open to all strangers, principally under the care of our consul, Mr. Walne. There is also a literary institution, founded by Dr. Abbott and M. Priess, having in view not only a collection of literature connected with Egypt, but the publication from time to time of new discoveries and old MSS. In the former are held weekly "conversaziones," where the appearance of the guests is as varied as the information to be obtained from their frank and ready courtesy. Pipes and coffee, nargilehs and sherbets, are handed round to turbans and tarbooshes, hats and grey hairs. Conversation flows freely and richly among men who seldom meet, and who appreciate that meeting; all have something to communicate, and all have much to learn. Among the leaders of this society, I need only mention our distinguished countrymen, Sir Gardner Wilkinson and Mr. Lane; M. Linant and Clot Bey, and all the most enlightened of the travellers who fill the numerous hotels.

I must not omit allusion to the valuable Antiquarian Museum of Dr. Abbott, and the

well-chosen collection of antiquities and natural history belonging to Clot Bey; both of which are most liberally open to the inspection of strangers.

The public schools are well worthy of a visit; and as they are the most praiseworthy of Mehemet Ali's numerous establishments, I shall introduce them when speaking of his life and character.

I have little to say of the mosques, which considerably disappointed my expectation. There are four hundred in Cairo, and scarcely any village in Egypt is without one; and yet there are only three in all Nubia: to this latter cause the Moollahs attribute tendency to drunkenness and other failings, not uncommon above the Cataract.

These mosques consist generally of cloisters surrounding a square court, in which stands a fountain for ablutions. The sanctuary is always on the eastern side, towards Mecca, and the whole aspect of the building reminds one of a gutted cathedral. It is true that some are elaborately decorated with painting or sculpture of leaves and flowers; and friezes, consisting of verses from the Koran, are not unfrequent; but, generally, nothing can be more naked and cheerless than the interior of a Moslem temple. It contains no furniture, except a pulpit, a few mats, and a number of small lamps suspended from the dome. When a mosque becomes old, it is considered irreverent to repair it; it is therefore allowed to fall, and a new one occupies its place. Attached to the mosque of El Azhar is the university, in which the classic languages are unknown, science much neglected, and a vast amount of Moslem theology principally excercises the students' minds.

There are several hospitals and schools of medicine; among the latter there is one devoted to educating female surgeons, which is characteristic of the country. The greater number of pupils are Abyssinians and negresses, who learn quickly and pay great attention to Mademoiselle Goult's lectures on medical science; that branch of it especially in which it may be supposed they are most personally interested, and in which they practise exclusively.

These are all dry details, which are uninteresting I fear to those who do not visit Cairo, and too meagre for those who do. I shall not allude to the Courts of Justice further than to say, that the name is a bitter irony applied to tribunals in which the unblushing bribery is only to be equalled by the profound ignorance of those who administer the laws.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE PYRAMIDS.

Instead of useful works, like Nature great,
Enormous, cruel wonders, crushed the land.
ANON.

Upon the desert's edge, as last I lay,
Before me rose, in wonderful array,
Those works where man has rivalled Nature most—
Those pyramids, that fear no more decay
Than waves inflict upon the rockiest coast,
Or winds on mountain-steeps; and like endurance boast.
R. M. MILNES.

TAKE the whole area of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and convert its gardens into a heap of stones; take one hundred thousand men from their families and their free labours, and employ them, with the taskmaster's lash as their only stimulus, during twenty years in heaping upon that platform the materials of all the houses for miles around it; accumulate their ruins till the pile mounts up one-third higher than the cross of St. Paul's—and you will then have an exact representation of the Great Pyramid, in its size and its mode of construction.

Then proceed with all the other squares of London; heap upon each the brick and stone that compose the city for miles around; and continue these insane constructions from Cæsar's Tower to Hampton Court: you will then have imitated those exploits of the Pharaohs, that have filled the world with wonder, and misplaced respect for four thousand years.

The Pyramids had become as familiar to our view as the Grampians to a Highlander, when we suddenly recollected that we had left them unexplored, while the days of our stay at Cairo were already numbered. Our donkeys, which stood at our door, from sunrise to sunset, were put into immediate requisition, and we started about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th of April.

Mahmoud had a child's birthday to celebrate; and as he assured us we should find comfortable lying among the tombs, and have no occasion for his services, we rashly believed him, and left him to his festivities. He was the best of Dragomans, but an Egyptian still, and we afterwards found cause to repent having trusted to him.

We sallied forth then from the "City of Victory," mounted on two donkeys; Abdallah and another donkey preceded us, as servants always do in this paradoxical country, while a sumpter-mule and four Arabs brought up the procession.

Arriving at the mouldering quays of Cairo Vecchia, we embarked our donkeys in a large

ferry-boat, which they entered as freely as if it belonged to the craft designated in our service "Jackass frigates." We passed the Nilometer on the island of Rhoda, and landed on the western bank of the river.

The sun had just set in glory over the crimsoned sands of the Lybian desert, throwing the mountain pyramids into fine relief against the gilded sky. There was a brilliant moon, that rendered the absence of the day-god a matter of indifference, except in an ornamental point of view, and even for this purpose, the pale, soft beams of Isis better became the City of the Dead we were about to visit. The plain which we traversed on our way thither, however, was as *riant* as if it led to Paris. Wide tracts of waving corn spread all around, and an avenue of acacias concealed all of the distant city, except its minarets, and the silvery mist which rose amongst them. The air was very balmy, and the breeze, which had been exploring the Pyramids, seemed to be whispering its discoveries to the palm-trees, and the ruins which ever and anon we came to, and passed by. Suddenly that green plain ceased like a bank, and the ocean-like desert received our silent steps, moving over its waves as noiselessly as ships upon the water.

We killed, somewhat wantonly, two large silvery snakes, traversed some dreary glens, and, surrounded by an immense number of Arabs, soon found ourselves at the foot of the rocky platform on which stands the Great Pyramid. This advantage of ground has been but little noticed by travellers, and yet it gives an additional elevation to the site of the Pyramid of at least forty feet above the surrounding plain.

Vast as these Pyramids appear at a distance, they do not appear to increase in size as you approach; but when at length you arrive at their base, and look up and around, you *do* feel as it were in an awful presence.

After indulging in the usual course of reveries pursued on such occasions, we proceeded in a practical spirit to examine the sepulchre that was to be our lodging for the night. The rocky platform I have alluded to is hollowed out towards the south into numerous tombs; from these the unresisting dead have been long expelled, but have bequeathed a Dejanira *souvenir* of stench and deathiness that Hercules himself might hesitate to encounter. Whilst we were smoking our chibouques and dinner was preparing, such swarms of fleas came crawling and quivering over us, that it gave one the sensation of wearing a hair shirt. There is nothing like statistics—my companion slew fifty-seven of these vampires, in the few minutes that intervened between our ordering dinner, and its appearance.

We did not remain long at the banquet, and hurried out to the Pyramids, accompanied only by five Bedouins, who had volunteered as guides. It was about midnight when we stood under the greatest wonder of the world, and then it appeared in all its mountain magnificence, eclipsing half of the sky.

We climbed up some distance on the eastern front, when we found the narrow entrance, and then half slided down a long narrow passage, which was admirably fitted with grooves for wheels the whole way through. There seemed to me little doubt that a car was adapted to run down this inclined plane, to be carried by the momentum of its descent up a circular staircase, now broken, which leads to another downward passage. These steep and smooth passages we traversed with considerable difficulty, the torches and naked Bedouins rendering the heat and other annoyances excessive. At length we stood in the King's Chamber, in the heart of the Pyramid. This is lined throughout with polished granite, and is entirely empty. The body of the King has hitherto escaped the researches of caliphs and antiquaries, and is supposed by Sir Gardner Wilkinson to lie beneath a niche which he points out.

As soon as we entered, the Bedouins set up a shout that made the Pyramid echo again through all its galleries, and then, turning somewhat rudely round, they demanded money from us. We put a fierce face on the matter, and began our difficult ascent with the assistance of our angry guides. As soon as we had emerged the Arabs turned round again, and declared that we should not stir until we made them a present. As I put my hands in my pocket, a gigantic Bedouin drew near to receive the expected tribute, and was not a little startled to feel the cold muzzle of a pistol at his breast, which an eloquent click had assured him was no mere demonstration; he fell back terrified, and humbly begged for pardon. Giving him a kick, and threatening him with the bastinado, we drove our guides before us to the other pyramids, which we wandered about in the bright moonlight; and then, after a glimpse at the sphinx, and a shot or two at jackals, we returned to our abominable tomb. Here, stretched on our cloaks on the hard rock, we were soon asleep, though the indignant Arabs crowded and stormed outside at the doorway, and myriads of fleas were avenging their cause within. We placed Abdallah for a door, reinforced him with a table, and courteously informed our besiegers that the first Arab who presented himself would receive a bullet in his brains as the price of his admission.

By the first daylight we resumed our in-

vestigation of the Pyramids and the sphinx. The latter is cut out of the solid rock, except the leonine paws, which are *built* of hewn stone. In front of this monster is a paved court, about fifty feet in extent, on which sacrifices were offered; and there was a sanctuary in her bosom (which sounds well), wherein the priests worshipped. This fantastic animal is "always found representing a king, the union of intellect and physical force;" and abounds in ancient Egypt, though never elsewhere in a form of such colossal dimensions as here. On one of the paws is a Greek inscription, a translation of which, by Dr. Young, I subjoin, as it is a sort of autobiography of the monster:—

"My form stupendous here the gods have placed,
Sparing each spot of harvest-bearing land:
And with this mighty work of art have graced
A rocky isle, encompassed once with sand;
And near the Pyramids have bid me stand:
Not that fierce sphynx that Thebes erewhile laid waste,
But great Latona's servant, mild and bland;
Watching the prince beloved, who fills the throne
Of Egypt's plains, and calls the Nile his own.
That heavenly monarch, who his foes defies,
Like Vulcan powerful, and like Pallas wise."

This inscription is attributed to Arrian.

The sphinx is called by the Arabs "the father of terror," or "immensity." Its features, as well as its attitude, convey an impression of profound repose: the former are mutilated, and want a nose, but appear to be Egyptian in their character; though they are partially painted a dirty red colour, and might pass for an exaggeration of the countenance of Crib after a severe "punishing," some authors have traced in them an expression of the softest beauty and most winning grace. If it were so, the contrast of such loveliness with the colossal size, and its leonine body, must have produced a wonderful effect, Una and her Lion, or the Zodiacal signs of Leo and Virgo, thus blended into one.

Near here is an immense tomb, discovered by Colonel Vyse, containing a coffin of black basalt, which still remains, and a sarcophagus, which has been removed to the British Museum. Near here was also found a magnificent gold ring, belonging formerly to Cheops, and now to Dr. Abbott.

Sir Gardner Wilkinson dates the building of the Pyramids about 2160 B.C., or six hundred and twenty-five years before the Exodus of the Israelites. Lord Lindsay ingeniously argues that they were built by the shepherd kings, who were expelled by Alisphragmuthosis, the Pharaoh of our Joseph. This would make their date about 1900 B.C. But such discussion would be out of place in a work like this, and I shall only mention having met with an authority, which I cannot now recall, that describes the three Great Pyramids as having been designated the gold, the silver, and the jewelled, owing to their being cased over with yellow, white, and spotted marble. Much has been said to contradict their having been used as sepulchres, and with some appearance of plausibility. If they were used for this purpose, they were doubtless connected also with the worship of the country, and may have been selected for the former purpose on account of their consecration, as we use Westminster Abbey.

There appears to me to be little doubt but that their form, which we find also at Benares and in Mexico, was meant to symbolise the creative principle, as was the obelisk, though in a manner which I cannot here discuss.

The erection of one of these Pyramids is ascribed to a Pharaonic princess of great beauty, who was one day taunted by her father with the inutility of the admiration that she excited. Pyramid-building was then the fashion of the family, and she swore that she would leave behind her a monument of the power of her charms as perdurable as her august relations did of the power of their armies. The number of her lovers was increased by all those who were content to sacrifice their fortunes for her smiles. The Pyramid rose rapidly; with the frailty of its foundress, the massive monument increased; her lovers were ruined, but the fair architect became immortal, and found celebrity long afterwards in Sappho's verse.

Another legend relates that a beautiful Greek girl, named Rhodope, was once bathing in the Nile, and the very birds of the air hovered round to gaze upon her beauty. An eagle, more enthusiastic than the rest, carried away one of her slippers in his talons, but startled by a shout of Memphian loyalty, he let fall the souvenir at the feet of Pharaoh, who was holding his court in the open air. It is needless to add how the owner was sought, how found, how wooed, how won; and how she now sleeps within her Pyramid.

To return to practical details: the Great Pyramid covers eight acres, and is eight hundred feet in height, or one-third higher than the cross on St. Paul's. Each Pyramid appears to have stood in a square court, hewn from the rock, in which were small tombs, and perhaps temples. Far away as the eye can follow, a line of Pyramids of various dimensions succeeds, among wavy heaps of tombs and catacombs, that might seem to be the cemetery of the whole world.

On our return to the tomb, we found the Sheikh of the village, who had heard of the robber-like demands of the Arabs, and had brought his executioner to bastinado them.

We refused, perhaps weakly, to permit this; and, distributing some small gratuities that made the whole tribe happy, we took our homeward way, shooting quails as we passed through the corn-fields.

We visited the island of Rhoda on our return to Cairo, where we were very hospitably received by its superintendent, Mr. Trail, who escorted us over Ibrahim Pasha's extensive gardens. These are watered by innumerable little canals, filled from the river by the perpetual labour of sixty buffaloes at the water-wheels. There are some fine orange and pomegranate groves here; and English art has done its utmost to give it the appearance of a European garden, but in vain.

The following day I left Cairo without regret, except in being obliged to part from my fellow-traveller, who returned to Europe, while my path lay Eastward still. I have hitherto abstained, as much as possible, from introducing him in these pages, feeling that I had no right to involve his name in my adventures. This is no place to pronounce his eulogy; but a tribute to intellect, courage, kindness, and considerateness, can never be misplaced; and such I offer to the memory of our (to me, at least) most pleasant companionship.

It was late at night when we parted at the gates of Cairo, and I rode on alone to Boulac, where my boat awaited me. I had here another farewell to take; and, as we lingered under the trellised vines, talking over a past that then appeared so full, and a future that seemed then so blank, the night wore on; and, though the breeze blew fair, and the stream, like myself, was hurrying to the sea, I could still discern the summit of the Great Pyramid towering above the desert, when daylight came.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### MODERN ALEXANDRIA.

Cette ville devait être la capitale du monde. Elle est située entre l'Asie et l'Europe, à portée des Indes et de l'Europe.

NAPOLEON.

I HAVE hitherto kept up a sort of journalizing through these discursive pages, endeavouring to avoid all personal details, except such as appeared conducive to throwing light on the manners of the people amongst whom I lived, or the countries I was traversing. I have now little more to add of a personal nature, and shall then conclude this slight review of Egypt by some account of its establishments and resources; a few words concerning Mehemet Ali, and the relations of England with the country of which he has possessed himself.

Having been baffled in my hopes of reaching Abyssinia, I hastened my return to Cairo, intending to accompany the caravan of pilgrims some distance on their route towards Mecca, and then, branching off to Mount Sinai, to enter Palestine by way of Petra, and the shores of the Dead Sea, if possible.

I found the caravan had already left Cairo; and the heats, which had now set in, added to my recent illness, rendered it impossible to undergo a journey of forty days on dromedaries, so that I was forced to proceed to Syria by way of Alexandria and Beyrout.

As I have mentioned, I left Boulac late one evening in an Arab boat, and on the following day the northerly wind came on to blow so heavily that we were obliged to moor under the shelter of the bank. When the gale had a little subsided, I landed to get some shooting while the boat proceeded slowly down the stream, and I was soon lost in the immense plain of wheat and Indian corn that bordered the river.

I shot a considerable number of quails, and still wandered on; now allured to the banks by a flight of wild fowl; now to the edge of the desert, by the tracks of a wild boar.

I had consumed some hours thus, when I found myself on the edge of a jungle, which, suddenly ceasing, left nothing but the desert and the river round me. The day had been intensely hot, and suddenly I was overtaken with extreme fatigue, and obliged to lie down upon the sands to rest. Far as the eye could reach, there was no shelter—no, not so much as a beetle could repose in; and the only Arab who accompanied me replied to my glance with a significant "Mafeesh," and a shrug of his shoulders. Even he was panting with exhaustion, and streaming at every pore. The boat was still far away, and we had nothing for it but Islam resignation, not even a pipe.

And there ran the river, deep, bright, and cool, before my dazzled eyes; and, after long hesitation, I could resist no longer, but plunged in, and swam, and drank, and revelled in its waves with excessive luxury. Fever almost instantly came on, and I remember little but vague, dreamy sensations of intense suffering, until we reached the Mahmoudie canal. Here I was transferred into another boat, and reached Alexandria on the fourth night after my departure from Boulac.

The river-port was crowded with filthy boats, and swarmed with their crews, who seemed to live in perpetual warfare with one another.

I suppose we had got into a berth that we had no right to, for we were instantly assailed

by every Arab within reach or hearing. Some went so far as to jump on board our boat to remove her by force; but this was an indignity that a Frank could not submit to. Three days' fever did not conduce to meekness, and the *mêlée* that ensued was more reviving than being nurse-tended for a week.

The stormy moon threw an uncertain light on the dark, struggling figures, and flashing eyes, and gleaming steel; the wind roared in wild concert with the fierce vociferations of the Arabs, and crashing spars. There was a rush, and then a struggle; our deck was cleared, and the next moment an officer of the patrol showed his red tarboosh, and all was over. We were then left to sleep in such peace as the wild dogs' howl and the storm's din permitted.

The next morning's light found all the baggage on camels, and my Syrian servant (a Christian by the by) discharged for robbery.

Strange and African as Alexandria had appeared to me three months before, it now seemed familiar, and almost European. The streets were thronged with men in hats, and smooth chins; the cafés rustled with newspapers; the walls were placarded with announcements of the evening's opera; and, above all, the sea, reflecting the British flag, lay stretched out in glory before me.

Where the Post only comes in once a month, it may be supposed that the arrival of each packet is anxiously looked for. Every European eye in Alexandria was turned perpetually in the direction of the British Consul's flag-staff, whereon the hoisting of the red Ensign was to announce the first appearance of the Oriental steamer.

She was late, however, by some days, and, as the Beyrout packet waited for her arrival, I took up my quarters in the comfortable Hôtel d'Orient, and found some pleasant acquaintances among the resident merchants, and the numerous passengers just arrived from Suez.

The transit across the desert is now a mere party of pleasure; and, before leaving Cairo, I had seen some ladies with reticules and lapdogs in a well appointed four-horse Suez mail, that would not have created much surprise in Piccadilly. There are comfortable resting-places twice on the route, and temporary establishments every ten miles. The entire distance of eighty-five miles is performed without fatigue by those who have made arrangements beforehand, and I never heard a complaint of any of the multifarious baggage of Indian passengers being lost.

On arriving at Cairo, a day or two is allowed to travellers to examine the city, and then they are forwarded to Alexandria by English steamers plying on the Nile, and the Mahmoudie canal.

Hill's hotel, at Cairo, and the whole business of the transit line from Alexandria, was until lately in English hands. By what appeared to me an adroit manœuvre of the Pasha's, an Italian, named Tibaldi, now conducts the principal, if not the entire business. He is, it is true, connected by marriage with a highly respected English merchant, but he is, nevertheless, a mere agent of the Pasha, who supplies capital for his undertaking.

Mehemet Ali found Alexandria a nest of pirates; he has made it the most important seaport in the Levant, and restored to commerce a path to India that had been neglected for centuries.*

"Alexander," said Napoleon, "displayed his genius more in founding Alexandria, and in contemplating the transportation thither of his seat of empire, than by the most dazzling victories. This city ought to be the capital of the world; it is situated between Asia and Africa, and connects Europe with the Indies. It is the only safe anchorage for five hundred leagues of coast, extending from Tunis to Alexandretta; it is at one of the ancient mouths of the Nile. All the squadrons of the universe might find moorings there, and in the old port are safe from storms and invasion."

The Mole, which protects this important harbour, is terminated by a modern lighthouse placed where the Pharos of the Ptolemies once stood. This offers now at once a warning and an invitation, a battery and a beacon. The western harbour is very deep and safe, but the eastern is protected from the sea by a sunken reef of rocks, too near the surface to permit a first-rate line of battle ship to pass over it without taking out her guns and heavy stores.

The eastern harbour is exposed and unsafe, and was the only port, until recently, allowed to Christian vessels. Mehemet Ali abolished this injurious and degrading prohibition—which had long afforded a proof of the extent to which our scruples with regard to Turkey permitted us to be bullied in the East.

The population of Alexandria amounts to about 65,000 souls, of which the crews, the workmen, the soldiers, and other immediate dependants of the Pasha, form one-third.

Consuls of all the principal nations of Europe reside here, and, together with numerous wealthy merchants, might form a very extensive society. The influence of the habits or the climate of the country, however, seems to prohibit this, and there is little or no domestic intercourse among the numerous European families resident here. The climate

* The Venetians obtained a settlement here, and carried on their energetic commerce thence to India, but the Cape of Good Hope ruined it again.

is the worst in Egypt, the neighbourhood the least interesting, and nothing but business or duty can induce a residence in a city that combines all the worst features of European and Asiatic life, with the least possible of their advantages.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### AGRICULTURE—MANUFACTORIES—COMMERCE.

There, methinks, might be enjoyment, more than in this march of mind,
In the steam-loom, in the factory, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

TENNYSON.

AGRICULTURE appears to be unquestionably the form of physical labour most conducive to the happiness and health of a people, more especially of those who inhabit a warm climate and a luxuriant soil. It was the only occupation of the golden age, and probably even in Eden its pursuits lent an interest to life and a zest to repose. Egypt is essentially an agricultural country, and its people an agricultural population. The latter have neither energies nor genius for manufactures, and all those that have been introduced by Mehemet Ali have been forced upon an unwilling people, who will forsake them the hour that the high pressure of his power ceases to enforce his will. Labourers for the factories are only to be obtained by conscription, and this is the heaviest misfortune that can befall an Egyptian after that of military service. They are compelled to work under task-masters, and the wretched pittance assigned by government as remuneration for their toil is always in arrear, and frequently paid in kind. This latter practice is a sort of truck system, by which the Pasha's agents pay the workmen in cotton, shoes, sugar, or whatever else lies in superfluity on their hands.

Thus, it may be supposed that the Egyptian considers himself as fortunate indeed if allowed to devote his industry to the light labours that the land requires. He turns up the easy soil with a wooden plough of the simplest construction, unaltered in its pattern from those we find upon the tombs of three thousand years ago. When the seed is sown, a trunk of a palm-tree, drawn by two oxen, serves all the purposes of harrowing and rolling. When the corn is cut, the sheaves are collected in a heap on some hard spot of ground, and then strewn in a circle, over which buffaloes draw a light sledge, and thus thresh out the grain.

The inundation of the Nile affords a universal, and the only, manuring of the lands of Egypt. When the waters retire about the month of November, the seed is sown, and harvest appears in March. Thus, new wheat and barley can be offered in the English markets in the first week of April.

Until 1821, the cotton plant was only found as an ornament in some gardens of Cairo. It is now, after wheat, the most important production of the valley of the Nile. Its culture adopted by the Pasha, at the recommendation of M. Jamel, a Frenchman, succeeded beyond expectation. It is planted in March, and gathered in November or December: it requires a good soil, and renewal of seed every third year. Indigo is also a recent introduction, and produces considerable revenue to the Pasha, particularly that which is grown in Nubia.

Rice is kept in water, and afterwards under damp straw, until it begins to germinate; then planted in moist land. It is sown in November, and threshed at the same time, and in the same primitive manner as the wheat.

The fruitful soil in Egypt generally produces three crops in the year; one by inundation, and two by irrigation. This last I have already described as very severe labour, and as employing 150,000 men, and 50,000 oxen, at the shadoofs and water-wheels.

The monstrous injustice which is practised on the peasant in various forms of taxation is almost incredible. Government supplies oxen and seed, it is true, but the peasant has to pay nearly the value of the former every year, and the latter is always given in fraudulent measure, and demanded back in full. The taxing officers frequently exact twice or threefold the value of their claims; and even when this is paid, the poor peasant may be called upon to make up the arrears of any insolvent neighbour.

The Pasha has established a number of factories, in which cotton, linen, woollen, silk, and other stuffs, are produced, besides iron foundries, and manufactories of arms.

There are fifteen cotton factories, containing 1,459 spinning-jennies. That of Malta, at Boulac, is well worth a visit, and, to a superficial observer, appears as well conducted as any in England. The wool employed in the cloth factories is all native, except a small quantity imported from Tunis.

The manufactures of Egypt are altogether monopolized by the Pasha, and only maintain their existence by his fiat. Notwithstanding the low prices of the raw material, and the small expense of human labour, this extensive speculator can be undersold by Europeans in every branch of his various manufactures. Besides this, the articles are all inferior in quality to those of Europe.

The climate appears to take part with the inhabitants against manufactures: the heat of the weather is injurious to the material, and the fine sand that pervades every breeze of wind is very destructive to the machinery. Moreover, the cultivable soil of Egypt, which the most inveterate political economist will allow should first be attended to, requires more labourers than the present population can afford; and thus the country suffers as much from Mehemet Ali's passion for manufactures as for war.

All these considerations, together with Ibrahim Pasha's preference for agriculture, only give to the factories a life-lease in Egypt; and before many years pass away, we shall probably see a new and extensive market opened to England, by the return of the unwilling mechanics to the agricultural labours from which they have been torn by their tyrant.

I have not been able to learn the number of persons engaged in manufactures in Egypt, but it must be very considerable, owing to the number and variety of the latter; while their novelty makes them felt as a still severer hardship by the poor men and children that are doomed to the tending of them.

Alexandria must, probably, sooner or later, become the most important commercial port in the world; not only from its central situation, its admirable harbour, and its being the point of confluence of three quarters of the globe, but as the port of all India and Southern Asia, whose resources are only now beginning to be developed, and to whose wide regions China has only now been added by England's brief and momentous victories over barbarian power and prejudice.

Up to the end of the fifteenth century Alexandria possessed the Indian trade, such as then existed; and, even after the Portuguese had discovered the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, Albuquerque eagerly strove to accomplish, and had nearly succeeded in obtaining, a canal from Suez to the Red Sea. Since then, the interests of the East have prodigiously increased, and the agencies at our command have proportionably altered. Instead of a few small settlements on the coast of India, or chance enterprises in which armed vessels, half-pirate, half-merchantmen, trafficked European baubles for savage wealth, we have now an empire as large as all Europe, containing cities larger than Paris, and yielding a revenue half as large again as that of Russia. We have a standing army as large as that of Austria, and a greater number of Moslems alone are subject to our Queen than the Sultan of Constantinople rules over.

Until lately, India was four or five months' distant from England. Steam has now caused oceans to shrink into mere channels, and these channels are bridged over by our steamers. From London to Alexandria is England, from Suez to Chusan is England still, and Egypt presents a mere bank of eighty or ninety miles in breadth. This will soon be spanned by a railway which English iron must supply, and which English steel must guard.

The present commerce of Egypt consists principally of wheat, cotton, rice, indigo, and opium, as exports: of cloth and linen, timber for building, iron, cutlery, paper, glass, oil, and wine, as imports. The value of the importations last year was about £2,679,000, that of the exports about £2,190,000; of these the imports from England amounted to about £600,640; while her exports thence only reached about £216,000. The exports and imports of Turkey nearly balance each other, as do those of Austria, whose trade is the most inconsiderable in Alexandria.*

The whole annual commerce of Egypt, by way of the Red Sea, and caravans, is valued at about £400,000. Every year a caravan comes from Abyssinia with a number of black slaves, gold-dust, gum, ivory, ostrich feathers, &c.; another caravan from Morocco, with pilgrims for Mecca, comes through Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis, across the desert, to Alexandria. There are also caravans arriving occasionally from Damascus with silks, dried fruit, and oil.

In 1822, there were only sixteen mercantile houses in Alexandria, there are now forty-four; of these thirteen are French, nine are Austrian, and only seven are English. There is a tribunal of Commerce established by the Pasha, by which all mercantile disputes and differences are heard and adjudged.

In 1814, suddenly appeared that astonishing decree, by which the Pasha announced to the inhabitants of Egypt that the whole country belonged to him, and that all the dwellers therein were but labourers on his great farm, or at best but tenants at his will. Mehemet Ali made a pretext to visit Arabia, while this decree was being carried into effect by his minister. The men bowed tamely to his decree, but the women rose tumultuously, and excited some leading sheikhs to make a demonstration of resistance. One of the latter was arrested and executed on some pretence foreign to the occasion; the women were allowed to talk out their indignation, and Egypt has been ever since the unquestioned private property of the Pasha. Soon afterwards, he appropriated all the revenues belonging to pious institutions, and took them

* A merchant at Alexandria told me he could ship wheat at Alexandria at 12s. a quarter, and beans at the same price, yet neither paid in the English market, except under peculiar circumstances.

under his own protection. This last measure created more dissatisfaction than the former one, as it made so many desperate. Previous to this appropriation, 6000 persons received daily alms from the mosque of El Azhar alone, and 2000 slept within its walls.

It is true that Mehemet Ali had a precedent for thus taking possession of all the land of Egypt in the case of Joseph's Pharaoh, Osirtesen the First, in the year 1706 B.C.: but, in the latter case, the Egyptians received a consideration for the loss of their possessions, and Pharaoh only virtually possessed himself of quit-rents, amounting to one-fifth of the value of the agricultural produce. From Mehemet Ali the Egyptians received nothing in lieu of their possessions, except a somewhat better administration of public affairs and some better irrigation for the lands. In return for this, the Pasha claims four-fifths of the produce of the land.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### MEHEMET ALI.

Ambition, like a torrent, ne'er looks back;
It is a swelling and the last affection
A great mind can put off. It is a rebel
Both to the soul and reason, and enforces
All laws, all conscience; tramples on Religion,
And offers violence to Loyalty.
*Catiline.*—BEN JONSON.

IN Europe, the name of Mehemet Ali is familiar to every mind as one of the great powers that share the rule of this great world. We think of him simply as seated on the throne of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies; and seldom recur to the eventful and romantic career which shot him upward from the rank of a peasant to that of a prince. His great namesake,* and Cromwell, and Bernadotte, and Napoleon himself, accomplished less extraordinary and unlooked-for enterprise of life than this Turk has done, although the distance and obscurity of the people over whom he attained empire render his deeds less dazzling to careless or indifferent observers.

Like Mahomet, when he awoke from the dream of youth to the reality of manhood, he found himself in the depths of poverty: unlike the Prophet, however, he had none of the prestige of ancient blood to buoy him up, and was indebted to himself, and not to his ancestry, for his rise. He was of humble —of what would in other times have been called, of base—origin. Thank God, even in England we know of that term no longer, except as applied to the deeds, and not the birth of our fellow-men! If the world, in its age and its many sources of enlightenment, has learned nothing more, it has at least come better to understand what is due to man, as the creature of God, and not of circumstance; and be it remembered in times to come, when pedigrees are forgotten, that those whose ancestors bore pennons at the battle of Hastings were never the last to acknowledge this.

This aphorism may seem misplaced, as applied to the history of a Turk, amongst whose people there is little of that distinction of rank which parks off the different classes in Europe into separate societies; nevertheless, even the Osmanlis and the Arabs are considerably prejudiced in favour of having ancient blood in the palace as well as in the stable.

Napoleon and Mehemet Ali came into the world in the same year of grace, 1769.* The same war opened to each an arena for his strength; and widely differing as were the places and the people amongst whom they had to struggle for the mastery, there are strikingly similar events in the career of both. Each was an adventurer on a foreign soil; each attained political, through military, power; each trampled fearlessly upon every prejudice that interfered with his progress; and each converted the crisis that appeared to threaten him with ruin into the means of acquiring sovereignty.

Mehemet Ali was born at Cavala, a small town in Roumelia, and is, therefore, a Turk, and not an Albanian, as has been frequently supposed, from his career having been so much involved with the latter. His father was a poor man, who united the occupation of a fisherman to that of a farmer. The boy devoted himself to the former business, and early acquired a character for courage and conduct that invested him with unbounded influence amongst his associates. Some pirates having made a foray into his neighbourhood, he hastily collected a body of volunteers, pursued the marauders in fishing-boats, recovered the spoil, and made himself a reputation in Cavala. This, in return, made him lieutenant to the governor, and an object of interest to the governor's wife; both of which circumstances he turned to such good account, that, on the decease of his superior, he succeeded to his command, his widow, and his wealth. He then engaged extensively in the tobacco trade, for which his situation afforded him great facilities. Bankruptcy or ambition induced him to

* Mahomet, Mehemet, and Mahmoud, are modifications of the same name.

* No Turk ever knows his own age with certainty; but the Pasha of Egypt has freely adopted what French flattery suggested.

abandon business; and he eagerly embraced an offer to command a contingent of three hundred men raised at Cavala to recruit the Turkish army in Egypt.

During the operations against the French, and particularly at the battle of Aboukir, he distinguished himself conspicuously, acquired the rank of colonel, and obtained unbounded influence among the soldiery. When Egypt was evacuated by the French and British forces, the Mameluke Beys remained in arms, endeavouring to set aside the power of the Porte and to nominate a viceroy of their own selection. The soldiers, and particularly the Albanian regiments in the Turkish service, had already shown symptoms of a mutinous spirit, loudly demanding their arrears of pay and a change of officers.

Mehemet Ali well knew the strength of these soldiers and their wrongs, and also the weakness and inability of the Turkish general, Khosref Pasha. He therefore boldly declared himself the delegate of the soldiery, and a redresser of their grievances. Khosref Pasha sent to require his attendance at an audience to be held at midnight; and Mehemet Ali received the invitation while attending the evening parade. He well knew the purport of that message, and the deadly vengeance that awaited him; but he also read his own power in the Pasha's fears. "Out of the nettle, danger, he knew that he could pluck the flower, safety;" smiling, he kissed the general's note, and returned for answer that "he would be sure to come:" then, turning round to the soldiers on parade, he exclaimed, "I am sent for by the Pasha, and *you* well know the destiny that awaits the advocate of your wrongs in a midnight audience. I *will* go; but shall I go alone?" Four thousand Albanian swords flashed back an answer; and their shout of fierce defiance gave Khosref Pasha warning to escape to the citadel, in which, it is unnecessary to say, he declined to receive his dangerous guest.

"Now, then," said Mehemet Ali, "Cairo is for sale, and the strongest sword will buy it." The Albanians applauded the pithy sentiment, and instantly proceeded to put it into execution by electing Mehemet Ali as their leader. He opened the gates of the city to the hostile Mamelukes, defeated Khosref Pasha, took him prisoner at Damietta, and was acknowledged as general of the army by the Beys, in gratitude for his services.

Osman Bardissy and Elfy Bey were the leaders of the Mamelukes at this conjuncture, and became the deadliest rivals after the defeat of their common enemy Khosref. Osman was in possession of the city, and nominally commanded the Albanian troops; but Mehemet Ali stimulated them to demand the arrears of pay, while, at the same time, he stirred up the inhabitants of Cairo to resist the impositions which Osman laid upon them, in order to satisfy these demands.

The Bey, unable to withstand this simultaneous resistance of the people and the soldiery, sought safety in flight; and Mehemet Ali, after some further intrigues, named Kourschyd Pasha Viceroy of Egypt. He took upon himself this authority, with the most submissive respect for the Porte, and in the same submissive spirit permitted himself to be made Kaïmakan, the second in authority.

The Sultan not only confirmed these nominations, but some time afterwards, when the intrigues of Mehemet Ali had induced the Sheikhs to name him Viceroy, in place of Kourschyd Pasha, he confirmed also the latter appointment. This extraordinary success was obtained not only by the fear that the new Pasha had inspired, but also by a bribe of £300,000, which Mehemet Ali engaged to pay, and which the Porte knew he alone was capable of raising. This took place in the year 1805. The following year, Osman Bardissy, and Elfy Bey, his powerful Mameluke opponents, died almost at the same time, and left him without an enemy, except the Porte, to fear.

The Sultan, determined on turning his powerful vassal to some account, now ordered him to proceed into Arabia, on a campaign against the Wahabees. This powerful sect was founded by Sheikh Abd-el-Wahab, in the middle of the last century, and was to Mahometanism very much what Puritanism was to the English Church. It also called the sword to the assistance of its faith, and took possession of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina in 1810.

Encouraged by their success, these stern fanatics now turned their power to practical and profitable purposes; and pillaged indiscriminately the caravans of pilgrims and merchants, until they had acquired immense wealth, and entirely possessed themselves of the country of the Hedjaz.

The commands of the Porte to exterminate this sect were intended to exhaust the resources of Mehemet Ali, and perhaps to lead to his destruction; but he embraced the commission with gratitude. It gave him an opportunity of rendering his name popular as a defender of Islam, and an excuse for raising a larger army, which was destined for higher ulterior purposes. Toussoom, the Viceroy's son, had been appointed a Pasha of two tails, and was to head the expedition; but, before he departed on his mission, the Mamelukes were sacrificed, as a hecatomb to the peace of the province. Invited to a conference, and entrapped in the citadel, as I have before related, they were massacred

almost to a man. This took place on the 1st of March, 1811; and, in the autumn of the same year, the expedition proceeded to its destination in Arabia. At first, the armies of the orthodox encountered some severe checks; but the following year Medina was restored to the Porte, and, in 1812, Mehemet Ali proceeded in person to the Hedjaz, partly to superintend the war, but principally, perhaps, to allow an opportunity for his celebrated appropriation of all Egypt to be announced by his minister, Mohammed Laz.

The Porte, taking advantage of the absence of its Viceroy, with the treachery and meanness peculiar to the politics of the Divan, appointed a successor to Mehemet Ali in the person of Lateef Pasha. Treachery, however, seldom failed to find its match in Egypt, and Lateef was beheaded by the lieutenant of him who was Viceroy in his own right.

The Porte, at first, affected great indignation at this summary proceeding, and proclaimed Mehemet Ali an outlaw. He disregarded the epithet and its consequences, accomplished his pilgrimage in the Holy Land he had rescued from the heretics, and returned to Egypt, covered with glory, to make further preparations for war.

He had long seen the necessity of adopting European military tactics, and fixed his heart on creating a standing army. The first attempt at drilling Moslems by Christian officers created such discontent that he was obliged to abandon the project; but he sent the mutinous troops to conquer and die in the interior, when his son Ismail Pasha perished at Shendy, as I have before mentioned. His next attempt was to create an army of Blacks from among the conquered people of Sennaar and Cordofan. With this view he instituted a Camp of Instruction at Assouan, to which 30,000 Blacks were sent from the interior, and subjected to military discipline, under Colonel Sève, called in Egypt "Suleiman Pasha." This experiment was unsuccessful; the negroes died so rapidly that in a few years only one regiment remained from all this number. The Pasha then formed an Egyptian camp at Farshoot, to which the natives were gradually added, in proportion as the elder recruits had acquired sufficient discipline and *esprit de corps* to keep the younger in awe.

Whilst the senior portion of the Pasha's army was thus expiating its mutinous demonstrations in the wars of Æthiopia, and the junior was learning obedience in the barracks at Farshoot, the insurrection of the Greeks broke out, and Mehemet Ali applied to be allowed to subjugate the Morea for the Porte. This proposition at once restored him to Ottoman favour, and gave him an excuse for making new levies and raising fresh contributions among the people. All his energies were thenceforth employed in erecting barracks, schools of instruction, hospitals, and even factories. He invited French officers and instructors, who arrived in numbers; and while he was concentrating a disciplined army at the capital, he was scattering manufactories over the country. Every peasant might now be said to be in the Pasha's service, and Egypt was one vast camp or factory. The Egyptian, who was not impressed as a soldier or a manufacturer, was obliged to work hard at the water-wheel or plough, in order to supply food and forage for the troops, and the energies of the country were strained to the uttermost to meet this exigency of the Pasha's destiny. Had he now failed, or even faltered for a moment, he well knew that the bowstring and a successor would be the result. He struggled bravely on, to find stakes for the great game of power, and won it.

The Porte gladly accepted his offers of assistance, and conveyed its acceptance of them in the form of a command to send an armament into Greece.

In 1824, a powerful fleet, consisting of sixty-three sail, with one hundred transports, left Alexandria for the Morea, having on board 16,000 infantry and 700 cavalry, besides artillery. Ibrahim Pasha commanded this expedition; he was successful in his descent on Candia, and partially so in his operations in Greece. The Egyptian fleet, however, was soon afterwards involved in the destruction of that of Turkey, at the battle of Navarino, in 1827, and Ibrahim returned with the remains of his army to Egypt. Mehemet Ali had been promised the Pashalic of all Syria previous to the Greek expedition, instead of which, the Porte conferred upon him that of Candia, which island had not been included in the treaty for the independence of Greece.*

He now devoted himself to the creation of a native fleet, and soon found himself in possession of a formidable naval force, with dockyards and arsenals capable of maintaining it and supplying all its casualties. He knew that the Porte only waited for an opportunity to declare war against him, and he boldly flung down the gauntlet first.

Abdallah, Pasha of Acre, had long been his enemy, and had lately given refuge to some Egyptian deserters, the surrender of whom was demanded by Mehemet. This the Pasha of Acre refused, whereupon the Viceroy of Egypt informed him laconically,

* It should in justice be mentioned that, while the Greeks suffered fearful persecution in all other parts of the Ottoman empire, they enjoyed perfect toleration in Egypt during the war.

that "he would come and take them, with *one* besides."

In 1831, Ibrahim Pasha led an army of 24,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry against Acre, which he took after six months' siege, and sent Abdallah prisoner to Cairo. War was now openly declared between Mehemet Ali and the Porte, and a numerous army belonging to the latter was defeated at Homs by Ibrahim Pasha, in 1832. Soon afterwards, the Egyptians routed the army of the grand vizir Hosseyn Pasha, at Beylan, which laid open to them the passes of Mount Taurus; and, in the December of the same year, the victory of Koniah, with the capture of the Turkish general, Reschid Pasha, gave Ibrahim Pasha the command of Constantinople. Then the Porte awakened to a sense of its weakness, and, like the horse in the fable, that invoked the assistance of the man to expel the deer from his pasture, applied to Russia for protection. The Autocrat immediately marched 25,000 soldiers to Constantinople, and, whilst he protected the Ottoman empire, wrung from it the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi.

In the hour of his success, Mehemet Ali had had the self-command to require only the Pashalic of Syria; and, therefore, when Russia and the other great European powers interfered to prevent his further progress, he was able to fall back with dignity on his first demand. This was ultimately granted. The Taurus became the limits of Mehemet Ali's province, and, in return, he engaged to pay the same tribute to the Porte that had hitherto been promised, rather than made good, by the petty Pashalics of Syria.

Mehemet Ali had now almost succeeded in his project of restoring the ancient bounds of the Caliphat. Bagdad alone remained to be invaded, and from this, the conqueror of Syria prudently abstained. He knew that his principal security consisted in his being nominally a dependant of the Porte; and that the European powers would respect his territory only so long as it professedly belonged to the Sultan. Once that position was abandoned, one person had the same right, "of the strongest hand" to Egypt, that he or any other could lay claim to.

The Sultan, who felt his disgraces rankling deeply, re-organized his army, and refitted his fleet. The former was crushed at the battle of Nezib, in 1839, and the latter deserted to the Pasha. In speaking of Syria, I shall have to touch upon our brief but momentous campaign; undertaken, not so much against Mehemet Ali, as to rescue Turkey from the protectorate of Russia. Meanwhile, the hereditary Pashalic of Egypt has been acceded to by Europe, and the Pasha has nothing left from his Syrian campaigns except their glory, and the debts and impoverishment entailed upon his country thereby.

We have seen Mehemet Ali raise himself from the humblest rank of life to the very highest, unaided but by his own daring and predominating genius—creating an army for the purpose of opposing the enemies of the Faith; and thus rendering himself popular as its defender, while he was educating troops to oppose the vicegerent of the Prophet. There is but little doubt that, but for the interference of Europe, he would have dictated his own terms within the walls of Constantinople; although the faith of his followers was probably too reverential towards the sacred character of the Sultan to admit of his cherishing the hope of obtaining the throne.

Mehemet Ali is now seventy-five years of age. He wears well, and but little of decline is visible in the energies of his mind or body, though his restlessness and love of change are remarkably increased. He is of low stature, not exceeding five feet three inches, but powerfully built; and his keen, piercing eyes, and the energetic character of all his movements, indicate a sanguine and nervous temperament. Generally speaking, the Turks consider repose essential both to dignity and comfort; this man, on the other hand, paces his apartments by the hour with an eager and determined tread that is characteristic of his disposition. His beard is now snow-white, and though the lower part of his countenance is indicative of sensuality, his fine forehead and massive brows predominate over that expression so common in men of great physical energy. He has a delicate, well-born hand and foot; his dress is of the simplest description, but well put on; and his whole bearing is dignified, yet courteous and affable. In his conversation there is a prompt frankness that appears to spring from a disdain of concealment, and an impetuosity that could not have been exceeded in his youth.

Mehemet Ali had very great aspirations, and realised more of them than meaner minds could have believed possible, considering the circumstances of his state, and of the country he rules over. One object of his romantic ambition was the regeneration of the mouldering Ottoman empire, and he even volunteered to abandon all his prospects in Egypt for the situation of Grand Vizier. Failing in this, he endeavoured to make of the despised Arabs a martial people; of their exhausted and impoverished province, a fertile and manufacturing nation. Severe, but not cruel, he relentlessly swept from his path every opponent of his power; yet never was known to cherish vengeance, or to punish

for a personal offence towards himself. Enthusiastic to credulity, he eagerly listened to the golden promises of adventurers, and out of their many schemes of advantage he has realised the wealth of a cotton trade, olive plantations, sugar factories, and the more doubtful prosecution of other branches of industry. He abolished the power of punishing by death, until lately vested in the governors of provinces; he established a consistent system of taxation, which, though greatly abused by his officers, is tolerably just in its construction. He called in the aid of European skill to instruct his people, indifferent to the prejudices it raised against him; he tolerated all religions, and discountenanced fanaticism. With regard to this latter, I may mention an anecdote illustrative of his character. Some Europeans attending his levee, he observed that his servants made use of the left hand, which is considered impure, in presenting coffee to his guests. While the Christians were present, he took no notice of an insult, of which they were unconscious; but, immediately on their retiring, he sent for the servants and thus addressed them. "As you seem to think yourselves dishonoured in paying due respect to my guests, you shall no longer run the risk of having your prejudices thus offended. Depart instantly for Mecca, and there you may exercise the fanaticism that is preferable in your eyes to good manners, without control." They were banished.

Under the stern rule of the Pasha, Egypt has become perfectly secure to the traveller, and even Syria still feels the beneficial effect of his temporary rule. Besides having sent many Egyptians to study in England and France, the Pasha has invited instructors in every branch of science and of letters into Egypt. He established three classes of schools, under a ministry of public instruction; these consist of *primary*, *preparatory*, and *special* schools. Of the first there are sixty-six, containing each one hundred pupils, between the ages of eight and twelve. They attend during three years, and each year are renewed by one-third, as the former goes out. They learn the elements of the Arab language and arithmetic.

These primary schools send pupils to the two *preparatory* schools of Abouzabel and Alexandria, where they learn the Turkish language, mathematics, geography, and history.

The *special* schools are intended for the engineers, artillery, cavalry, infantry, medicine, agriculture, foreign languages, music, and the arts. There are altogether in Egypt nine thousand pupils, who are lodged, clothed, and fed, at the Pasha's expense.

Once entered as a pupil in any of these schools, the Egyptian becomes the property of the Pasha, and may be sent into the fleets, the army, or the manufactories at his will. Education, under these circumstances, is considered by the natives as only one degree less to be dreaded than conscription.

I have given such information of the Egyptian military and naval forces as I have been able to obtain in the Appendix, together with the income and expenditure of two years. To this I must refer the reader who is interested in such matters, and hasten to conclude this prolonged notice of Egypt and its ruler. Egypt is the easiest country in the world to conquer; she is so used to it! In fact, it is her ruler or rulers, for the time being, that offer the sole resistance she has ever made. All over the East, and here especially, power can be established by blood alone: since the days of Cleopatra, Egypt has never had a sovereign of Egyptian birth; yet, in her fallen provincial state, she has bled as profusely in the cause of each usurper, as if every ephemeral tyrant were to be the founder of a dynasty. The result of these immemorial wars, in which they have never had an interest, is an excessive distaste among the Egyptians for military service. Conscription of the sternest kind is necessary to drag them from their fields to form armies; and their lives are passed in one long effort to avoid taxation, which deprives them of every comfort; and this conscription which renders its victims hopeless. Once ranged under the Crescent banner, there is no hope of freedom but from infirmity or death. Brilliant as have been Mehemet Ali's successes, fertile as is the country he rules over, and peaceful as it appears to the grateful traveller, there is perhaps no more miserable nation under heaven.

The Egyptians have no motive to action; success in life is with them impossible; and their voluptuous climate contributes to the enervation of all moral and physical energies. As their climate predisposes them to indolence and sensuality; their government to servility, meanness, and dissimulation; their religion to intolerance, pharisaic observances, and falsehood; it may easily be imagined that there is little in their education, or in the principles instilled thereby, to counteract the tendencies which are inevitable from such influences.

They have no country to lose, no independence to forfeit, no patriotic feelings to be wounded; their national condition has fearfully fulfilled the prophetic doom, that they should "be trodden under foot and abased; a nation that should ever be under the rule of foreigners." Mehemet Ali has exhausted the last vital energies of the country; and it

government can retain influence in Egypt after his decease, that is not possessed of wealth enough to restore some shadow of prosperity, and principle enough to restore some shadow of independence to this degraded and unhappy land.

Meanwhile, Cairo is now the crowded thoroughfare of England and India. The red ensign is become as familiar to the Arabs of the Red Sea as to the people of Alexandria. Egypt is rapidly becoming influenced, not by the nation that gives officers to her armies, but by that which gives merchants to her counting-houses, and capital to her exhausted resources. She is gradually and unconsciously subsidising by the wealth that England lavishes, and hourly more entangled in those golden chains of interest from which no nation ever strove to loose itself.

With what temper Mehemet Ali regards this state of things it would be vain to inquire. At the age of seventy-five, a man is more likely to repose with complacency on what he has already accomplished, than to enter upon a new course of difficult, if not hopeless, undertakings. He had energy and moral courage enough to encounter the vicegerent of the Prophet in the field, and to vindicate the independence — not of his country, but of his command. Like Henry VIII., he converted the fat revenues of peaceful drones into the tough sinews of ambitious war; like Peter the Great, he made an army of steady soldiers out of slavish serfs, and a commanding navy out of a nest of pirates; like Sultan Mahmoud, he annihilated the Mamelukes, whose existence was more incompatible with his authority than was that of the Janissaries with the power of the Porte.

Mehemet Ali has done all this, and thereby placed himself in the front rank of History.

But there is a more difficult task than that of mustering forces in the field, or appropriating the property of the defenceless, or making massacre of imprisoned victims. To invest a nation with nationality; to give to popular impulse the character of public opinion, was beyond his power, or never suggested itself to his ambition. What loyalty can exist towards a Pasha? what patriotism in a Pashalic? The down-trodden and degraded Egyptian not only has never known another state of rule, but he has never felt the want of it; and herein is at once an element of strength and weakness in Mehemet Ali's position. The yielding soil afforded no resistance to the planting of his power, but at the same time it wanted all tenacity to retain, or enable it to take root. And, now the Pasha's days must needs be drawing to a close; his son Ibrahim is yet older, owing to his sensuality and intemperance; Seyd Pasha, though kindly disposed, is devoid of intellect. The character of Abbas Pasha, the only other of his family arrived at man's estate, exhibits a union of ferocity and vice, for which we can only find a parallel among the Roman emperors. And what is to become of Egypt? Is the Porte once more to extend its baleful authority over this unhappy country, with all the withering influence which it never ceases to exercise? Shall we replace the ignorant and fanatical followers of the Crescent in the province which became a kingdom through their imbecility in order that they may interrupt our commerce here, as they have been allowed to arrest the building of our church at Jerusalem?

Heaven forbid! When the old man who has bravely won this fertile province ceases to exist, let his selfish power perish with him. Let England not prostitute her influence to restore emancipated Egypt to the imbecile tyranny of the Porte, but endeavour to infuse into the country of her adoption the principles, together with the privileges of freedom. Let her lay aside all mock modesty as disreputable in the case of nations as of individuals, and double dealing, boldly assert her "right of way" through Egypt to India, while she leaves unquestioned that of France through Algiers to Timbuctoo.

English capital and industry would make Egypt a garden: English rule would make the fellah a free man; English principles would teach him honesty and truth; and, as to the comparative advantages of Turkish or English politics, let the world be the judge between Asia Minor and North America, between the influences of the Crescent and the Cross.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE LEVANT—BEYROUT.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee,
Greece, Egypt, Tyre, Assyria—where are they?
Thy waters wasted them, when they were free,
And many a tyrant since. They now obey
The stranger, slave, or savage—their decay
Has dried up realms to nations, not so thou;
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play:
Time writes no wrinkles on thine azure brow;
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

*Childe Harold.*

THE "Levant" of the Italians, the "Orient" of the French, the "Morgenland" of the Germans are pretty paraphrases of the "East." The former term is applied not only to the shores, but to the seas, over which the sun *rises* to the morningward of Malta. Bright and blue as it is, and fringed by the brightest

and most memorial shores, it is yet a very lonely sea: wild winds, that are almost Typhoons, sweep over it; iron coasts wrap it round; and to the south of Cerigo there is not a safe harbour in all its wide expanse, save that of Alexandria.

The commerce of the early world found shelter in the ports of Tyre, Sidon, Acre, and other harbours for small craft, such as that of Scanderoon. These are now filled up with the ruins of the quays, or stores that once overshadowed them; or closed up by ancient sands that might have run from the glass of old Time himself.

This sea is seldom without a swell, and the wind, like a young child, is always either troublesome or asleep: long calms, or changing gusty breezes, render steamers especially valuable in these waters; and to their instrumentality was chiefly owing the bold measures and extraordinary successes of our late naval operations on the coast of Syria. The rarity of passengers, and the decrease of trade between the chief seaports of Egypt and Syria, have prevented the establishment of steamers from Alexandria to Beyrout; so the mail is taken by a fast-sailing English schooner, that was once a yacht belonging to Lord Harborough.

I visited the admiral's flag-ship, and some other Egyptian men-of-war, and then pulled alongside the little schooner that was about to sail for Beyrout. We could not go on board of her, however, as she was in quarantine; indeed, she had been so, I believe, for some years, with the exception of a very few occasional days. Alexandria and Beyrout mutually vex one another with this restraint upon communication more for political than sanatory reasons; and, as this luckless packet has two trips to make in each month, it may be supposed she is scarcely clear of one fortnight's quarantine, when she incurs another.

How human nature can endure this perpetual imprisonment, under a broiling sun, in a coop of twenty feet wide, it is difficult to conceive. There is, moreover, almost always a swell at Alexandria, and generally a heavy sea at Beyrout, so that, even when at anchor, this little craft has as little rest as freedom. Yet her crew look as healthy and contented, and her officers are as gentlemanly and good-tempered, as if she was the flag-ship at Portsmouth.

The blue Peter was now flying on board this restless bark, the English mails transferred from the Oriental steamer, and I hurried on board with my voluminous luggage. A man who is accustomed to travel about England, with a couple of portmanteaus and a dressing-case, has little idea of the appurtenances of an Oriental traveller. There is no such thing as furnished lodgings, or hotels by the wayside in these countries. The inhabitants never take a journey unless compelled to do so by dire necessity, and then they seldom change their clothes until they arrive at their destination. When night comes on, they lie down in their cloaks in the open air, or in some filthy khan. An Englishman, therefore, is obliged to travel with an assortment of goods like those of an upholsterer, comprising every article his various exigencies may require, from a tent to a toasting-fork. He must have bed and bedding; a pantry, scullery, kitchen, and bakehouse, dangling on his camels: saddle, bridle, and water-bottles, arms of all kinds, carpets, mats, and lanterns besides; a wardrobe that would serve for a greenroom, containing all sorts of garments, from the British uniform to the Syrian turban, the Arab's kefieh, and the Greek capote. All these articles loaded a large boat to the water's edge, and took some time to transfer to the little packet, that lay pitching and straining at her anchor, like an impatient steed that paws the ground.

After months of indolent life in sultry Egypt among screaming Arabs or jabbering dragomans, to rush away over the lively waves, and hear English voices, and watch the steady conduct of English sailors, was a most pleasant change.

It was blowing very fresh as we ran out to sea under a close-reefed mainsail, but the sun was shining brightly, and the waves were of the purple colour that they wore to Homer's eyes; their foam flew from them in rainbow fragments, and the gallant little craft darted from wave to wave, like the joyous sea-birds that flew round her. Now she hovers for a moment on the watery precipice, now flings herself into the bosom of old Neptune, whose next throb sends her aloft again into the golden sunshine and the diamond spray, till the merry gale catches her drapery, and she plunges once more into the watery valleys, as if at hide and seek with her invisible playfellow, the wind.

Our passengers consisted of Captains P. and M., two countrymen of mine, a Swiss merchant, and two Italian travellers; these, with the Captain and Lieutenant, made quite a crowd in the little cabin. They were all pleasant fellows, and our voyage savoured more of a cruise in a yacht, than a passage in a packet. We never saw a sail, or caught sight of land, but now and then we had a glimpse of a dolphin, several flying fish fluttered on board with their iridescent wings, and lay panting, and apparently quite contented, on the deck.

On the fourth morning, the coast of Syria rose over the horizon, and the clearness of the atmosphere, together with the speed of

our yacht bounding before a southerly gale, made the magnificent panorama of the Lebanon start into sight, and develop its complicated beauty, as if by magic. At sunrise, a faint wavy line announced our approach to land; at eight o'clock we seemed in the very shadow of its mountains, and that country before us was the Holy Land!

For 1800 years, the Western world, in all its prosperous life and youthful energy, has looked with reverence and hope towards that hopeless and stricken, but yet honoured Land. Obscure and forgotten as a mere province of a fallen empire, it suddenly became invested with a glory till then unknown to earth. A few poor fishermen went forth from those shores among the nations, and announced such tidings as changed their destiny for ever. Human life became an altered state; new motives, new sympathies, new principles arose, new humanities became developed; new hopes, no longer bounded by, but enlarging from, the grave, animated our race. God had been amongst us, and spoken to us, like brethren, of our glorious inheritance.

It was natural, perhaps, that this bright hope and faith should degenerate into enthusiasm, the means were confounded with the end; the land of Palestine became, as it were, a geographical object of idolatry, and pilgrims rushed to its shores in countless multitudes, in the hope of laying down the burden of their sins upon its sacred soil.

The spirit of all Europe was warlike then: sometimes vainly struggling at home in instinctive endeavours to arrive at freedom; sometimes expatiating in any vague enterprise that merely promised exercise for its restless energy. The voice of the hermit Peter turned this spirit into a new channel, and the Cross became the emblem of devotion in the cause of chivalry, as well as of religion. That summons rent asunder every tie of love, and home, and interest. The warriors of England, France, and Austria, no longer knew a patriotism but for Palestine: no interest but for the Holy Sepulchre; no love but that of glory. Then rolled for centuries the tide of war from Europe upon Asia. Baffled and beaten back, or perishing there fruitlessly, like the rivers in its deserts, men learned at length that it was not by human means that glory was to be restored to Palestine: its prosperity seemed still reserved into far times for the Children of Promise. The Crescent shone triumphantly over Calvary, and taught the Christian that his faith was to be spiritual, and that its inspiration was no longer to be sought on earth.

But although this hallowed land is no longer an object of bloody ambition, it has lost none of the deep interest with which it inspired the most vehement crusader. We still experience a sort of patriotism for Palestine, and feel that the scenes enacted here were performed for the whole family of Man. Narrow as are its boundaries, we have all a share in the possession: what a church is to a city, Palestine is to the world.

No wonder then that we gazed anxiously and earnestly on those historic shores now rising from the sea. The first impressions of childhood are connected with that scenery; and infant lips in England's prosperous homes pronounce the names of forlorn Jerusalem and Galilee with reverence.

Phœnician fleets once covered these silent waters; wealthy cities once fringed those lonely shores; and during three thousand years, war has led all the nations of the earth in terrible procession along those plains. Yet it is not this mere vulgar history that thrills the pilgrim to the Holy Land with such feelings as no other spot on thewide earth inspires; but the belief that on yonder earth the Creator once trod with human feet, bowed down with human suffering, linked to humanity by its closest sympathy of sorrow, bedewing our tombs with his tears, and consecrating our world with his blood.

These are thoughts that will influence the most thoughtless traveller on his first view of Palestine, and convert the most reckless wanderer into a pilgrim for the time: even the infidel must feel, in his lonely and desecrated heart, a reverence for the *human* character of one who lived and died like Him of Nazareth.

And now we can recognize Sidon and Tyre; now the Pine Forest, and the garden-covered promontory: and now we open the city of Beyrout, with its groves and its dismantled towers, and the magnificent scenery that surrounds it.

All reveries and abstractions speedily gave place to practical considerations the moment the anchor plunged into the water, and the sails came fluttering down. A boat from the Board of Health announced to us a quarantine of twelve days, but permitted us to take a cottage for ourselves, apart from the lazaretto. Here we were to be watched and guarded, like so many felons; still it was a reprieve from that great pest-house, the lazaretto, whose melancholy inmates we could see wandering to and fro upon their narrow rock.

The next day my friend W. rowed me ashore to examine and take possession of our cottage, which was prettily situated in a mulberry grove. Here I was soon joined by P. and M., who were to share my quarters; while the Italians and the Swiss had taken possession of a terrace, on which they pitched their tent, and a hen-house in which they

slept, on the top of a cottage about a hundred yards off.

The first sensation of change was very agreeable, from the incessant pitching of the schooner to the repose of shore; from the perpetual glare of the sunny sea, to the rich green of the mulberry groves; and from our monotonous sea-life to all the gay variety of Syrian scenery and its picturesque people.

Our cottage-prison consists of a large apartment open to the north; from this, branch off three sleeping apartments and a kitchen; and over all are terraces, of various altitudes, commanding splendid views of the city and the bay. The only article of furniture on the premises when we took possession was a plank which served for sofa, near the window, in front of which was a little gallipot garden, that presented the only verdure within our reach. This specimen of horticulture was tended with care by each successive prisoner, who found in every weedy plant that it contained a Picciola. For the rest, our comforts were but few, even when we had nominally furnished our apartments from the city. My pallet was laid on the cold stone floor, and there was no glass to the windows, through which the noonday sun and the midnight blast came pouring in unchecked. M., as being more luxurious, possessed himself of a wooden shelf as a substitute for a bedstead; but, as it was much too short for the purpose, both ends of him used to hang over it, like a large salmon on a small plate. This couch, moreover, was so narrow, that he could only lie edgeways on it, and his falling asleep was always announced to my wakeful ears by his also falling on the floor, where he was fain to finish his rest in a less apoplectic, if in a less dignified position. Our own servants were of course included in our quarantine, and we were obliged to employ what were called "clean" men to go into the city to procure for us the necessaries of life.

For my part, I bore our quarantine with great philosophy, and was never weary of contemplating the novel scene of busy Syrian life around me. A large family occupied the lower part of our premises; and the small courtyard into which our window looked was occupied with all the little domestic incidents of daily life, in which I soon took almost at much interest as if I had been one of the family. I sympathized with the changes of weather that affected the operations of the silkworms; I grieved for the illness of the little child: I took as much interest in the attentions paid by the young Syrian swains to Katarin and Dudu as they did themselves; and a baking or a washing day appeared to me full of importance.

There was a very old woman, with a costume as indistinguishable in its various wrappings as were her features in their wrinkles. This old Maronite lady had three daughters, the eldest of whom was married to the man who farmed the orchard and the groves. She was very handsome, and industrious moreover, and, while she carried a sprawling, merry little imp at her open bosom, she was perpetually spinning silk on a spindle, and superintending the economy of her household. Her two sisters were also very handsome; indeed, to our eyes, so long accustomed to Egypt's dusky faces, they seemed beautiful. Their large dark eyes were full of expression, but had none of that sensational look so universal in Egypt, or the mournfulness of those of Nubia. Sparkling, and unornamented but by their own dark lashes, these Lebanonian eyes gazed about restlessly in search of whatever pleasure they could get. Their complexion was not so dark as that of a thorough-bred Italian, and there was a rich glow in their somewhat sun-coloured cheeks that told of health and freshness. The married women wore that extraordinary ornament that seems peculiar to them and to the unicorn, consisting of a horn from one to two feet in length, projecting from the upper forehead: this ornament is made of tin or silver, according to the wealth of the wearer; it rests upon a pad, and is never taken off, even at night. At a little distance it gives a majestic and imposing character to the figure, and a veil hangs gracefully from it, which can be gathered round the shoulders, and enshrines the fair wearer as in a tent. This ornament is confined to the matrons, the virgins wore their hair floating in exuberant curls over their shoulders. Their dress is indescribable by male lips, and all I can say of it is, that it is very graceful and pretty, and lavishly open at the bosom. The men, Christians as well as Moslems, wore turbans, loose drawers tied at the knee, and silk waistcoats buttoned up to the neck. Over this was worn, on Sundays and holydays, a large loose robe, which gave to groups a very picturesque, as to individuals a very dignified appearance. I speak of this Syrian family as I take it to be a type of others.

The household were astir at the first light; Eleesa, the comely matron, first gave liberty to the denizens of her poultry-yard, and then opened and shut more doors than I thought a village of such houses could contain. Then she called her pretty sisters, who seemed always loath to leave their beds: and then the screaming of children, the crowing of cocks, the lowing of cattle, and the woman-talk that ceased not thenceforth, announce that the day is fairly begun. Michaele is ingeniously ploughing the ground between the mulberry-trees with a beautiful little pair

of milkwhite oxen; Katarin and Dudu are picking mulberry-leaves for the silkworms; the old woman is crooning a low song, as she sits and spins in the early sunshine; and the little children are lisping Arabic requests for bonbons and backsheesh; a wayfarer diverges from the path to light his pipe, and refolds his turban as he recounts the news; then succeed other visitors, and all seem welcome, and all squat on the ground, and none derange the business that is going on. About noon, the family assembles for a repast of bread and clotted milk, and cucumbers and celery, and some sort of thin soup redolent of tomatoes; and then they loiter about in the pleasant shade, and laugh, and enjoy the mere consciousness of living; and the matron smokes her nargileh,* and the man his chibouque, and then they disperse again to their light labours, until sunset restores them to their leisure and their supper. Then come some men of various ages, and gaily-dressed girls from the city, each sex arriving apart, and only joining company in presence of their mutual friends; or a priest perhaps pays a friendly visit, with his dark robes and black turban; and the simple and social people continue in animated talk until the muezzin's call from the minarets announces the hour of prayer to the Moslem, and of retirement to these Christians.

While time thus passes with our hosts, we are rigidly confined to our upper story, except when, once a day, we take a short walk, accompanied by our guardiano, who announces to every one he meets that we are unclean! This calumniation only means that we are in quarantine, and people shun us accordingly, yet never seem to think it unreasonable that such dirty fellows should be allowed to go so much at large.

Sometimes we are visited by our friends the captain and lieutenant of the Emmetje, who even dine with us occasionally, rigidly guarded to and from their boat by the lazaretto guardiano. Several of the residents at Beyrout visited us, and kindly sent newspapers and periodicals to enliven our imprisonment. The officers of the Vernon frigate were also frequent visitors, and laid the foundation of an acquaintance to which I stood very deeply indebted during my illness and residence in this country.

Our terraces commanded a splendid view —all city, or garden, or grove, or sea, except where the Lebanon mountains started up in every variety of form and beauty that mountains can assume: here broken by deep glens, there mantled with vivid verdure; here a precipice was crowned by a Maronite village, or a convent, there a stream gushed in silver cataract from among dark woods: beneath ran a line of golden sands fringed with foam, and above, the snow lay in streaks, flecking the broken summits. Our cottage was near the water's edge; and, when my companions were asleep, and the household beneath us was still, even to the watch-dog, it was pleasant to sit in the moonlight and look out upon the quiet groves and the calm sea. Now and then the silence was broken by the fishermen who spread their nets along the shore, or the lingering steps of some white-veiled girl and her turbaned lover, whispering, I suppose, the nonsense that is as eloquent to Arabian, as to English ears, when uttered by the lips they love.

One day I was agreeably surprised by a visit from the Rev. Dr. Wilson, President of the Bombay Branch of the Asiatic Society. I had had the pleasure of making his valuable acquaintance at Cairo, and I now listened, with great interest, to the account of his journey to Petra and Jerusalem, which I had been prevented from sharing, to my great regret. He said that his Arabs, the Towara, had behaved very ill and extortionately during his journey from Mount Sinai to Wady Mousa; while the calumniated people of the latter place, in which lies Petra, had quite redeemed their character in his estimation. He had made considerable efforts to become acquainted with them, had found them very fair in their demands, and at least as well disposed to be honest as the other Arabs of the desert. They complained to him that the Towara, Alloeens, and other tribes, were in the habit of bringing strangers to their valleys; that they came as enemies, eating down their corn, drinking of their wells, and departing without giving them any remuneration. They added that he, and any other Frank travellers, might come as often as they pleased, and stay as long as they chose, if they only paid the moderate sum of 100 piastres * for each visitor.

They also told him of a tradition in their tribe, that they were of Jewish not Arabian blood, and that they had been converted many years ago to Mahometanism. This is an interesting fact as illustrative of the fulfilment of the prophecy, that "a remnant of Israel should inhabit Edom."

Dr. Wilson made a more satisfactory report of the state of the Church of England Mission at Jerusalem, than I had yet heard. At Nablous, the Shechem of the Bible, and the Neapolis of the Romans, he found the Samaritans still anxiously expecting the Messiah, whom, however, they call "El Muhdy, the guide." They ingeniously explain their limited prophecies to suit their views, and

* Waterpipe.

* About £1.

assert that the "Shiloh who was come" meant only Solomon.

Close to this city is Mount Gerizim, whither they still go up to worship four times a year; and at the end of the valley is the well called Jacob's, by Moslem and Jewish tradition; and that where our Saviour conversed with the woman of Samaria, according to the Christians.

The Jews of Nablous appeared very jealous of the Samaritans; but both parties listened patiently and attentively to Dr. Wilson's arguments. He found Saphet almost in ruins from the earthquake of 1837, in which 300 Moslems and 2,000 Jews perished; and Cæsarea in the same state of dilapidation from the same cause. I have taken the liberty of repeating these observations, as I was myself prevented from visiting these places in my tour through Palestine.

The next morning was May-day. I sat at my window waiting for the first sun-burst over the beautiful bay; and the moment he appeared, all the spars of the French fleet, until then as bare as winter-boughs, seemed suddenly to blossom into flags of every colour. It was Louis Philippe's birthday. A royal salute followed; and those garlands of flags, appearing through the clouds of smoke lighted up by the rising sun, produced a beautiful effect.

We had now performed our quarantines; the surgeon of the Lazaretto and some health-officers came to inspect us, and declared us free. I confess I was almost sorry to leave our cottage and my fair friends below, with and without horns; yet, as I stepped into the boat which Woodman's kindness had brought to transport me across the bay, I felt the elasticity of restored freedom compensate for everything else. Whether for plague or polities, imprisonment is a most irksome and undignified privation of life—for what is this life?

> "'Tis not to stalk about, and breathe fresh air,
> From time to time, or gaze upon the sun:—
> 'Tis to be free—when liberty is gone,
> Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish."

Merrily we swept across that beautiful bay. The picturesque town sent forth its voices faintly on the water; boats shot backwards and forwards to the shipping, pulled by turbaned and bearded men; and, here and there, a solitary fisherman sat plying his absorbing trade—his commerce with the waters, in which his coin is an ugly worm that he flings into the ocean's treasury, and receives in return some gleaming, struggling fish, painted like a parrot, and peculiar to these waters.

We landed about a mile beyond the town on some rocks nearly level with the tideless sea, and showing numerous traces of the ancient city of Berytus. I had taken apartments in a house belonging to a Maltese, named Antonio Bianchi, whose *present* establishment I can safely recommend to travellers. He then lived in an old-fashioned Syrian house, surrounded by mulberry gardens, which were intersected by paths fenced off by impenetrable barriers of the cactus, or Indian fig. This plant abounds everywhere, and not only protects but shadows all the lanes, after attaining to the height of twelve or eighteen feet.

I found there was a table d'hôte at this establishment; the principal guests of which were four queer-looking beings, each of whose histories would have furnished a romance, and each of their figures a striking frontispiece to the same.

One was an old soldier of Napoleon, now a silk merchant; a second a captain of an Italian pirate or smuggler; a third an expatriated Tyrolese; a fourth a young Italian of very irregular habits. Besides these, two swallows are inmates of the house, nesting in the rafters of the open room; there is a pair of tame pigeons, a broken-winged woodpecker with parrot-like plumage, an ill-tempered poodle, a drunken landlady with a pretty daughter, and a couple of cats.

I was obliged to remain here for some days, until a neighbouring cottage was ready for my reception; and I found full amusement from the queer inhabitants within, and the glorious scenery without. Moreover, there is a silkworm-shed under my bed-room window, belonging to the beautiful Kareela, a Maronite bride, who glides about groves of mulberries watching her silkworms, with a thin white veil over her graceful form; or, sometimes she sits upon the bank, embroidering the rich golden tapestries peculiar to Beyrout.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### SYRIAN SCENERY.

> Now upon Syria's land of roses
> Softly the light of eve reposes,
> And, like a glory, the broad sun
> Hangs over sainted Lebanon;
> Whose top in wintry grandeur towers,
> And whitens with eternal sleet,
> While summer, in a vale of flowers,
> Lies sleeping rosy at his feet.
>
> MOORE.

AFTER a few days' residence with Bianchi, I removed to a cottage nearer to the sea, and farther from the town. It belonged to a Maltese, who had been formerly a waiter at the Travellers' Club, in London, and who now supplied my simple ménage with as

much neatness and elegance as if my dining-room looked out upon Pall Mall. Far different, however, was the view. That which I now beheld is perhaps the finest in the world.

Come out upon the terrace whereon a tent is pitched, and rest on soft carpets in its shade; while Trimseni lights your chibouque, and Raswan offers you a cup of Mocha coffee perfumed with ambergris. From the rich gardens all round us numbers of flat-roofed cottages start up, and, as the sun is low, their gaily dressed inhabitants come forth to breathe the cool breezes, and enjoy their pipes and coffee. There is a joyous, and almost a festive, look, in all around us; the acacia blossoms are dancing in the breeze, the palms are waving salutations, and the flowers are flirting with one another in blushes and perfumed whisperings: the faint plash of the wave is echoed from the rocks; the hum of the distant city is broken by the rattle of the drum, and pierced by the fife with its wild Turkish music: flocks of pigeons rustle through the air, and their cooing is kept time to by the woodpecker like a castanet, while the sea-birds scream an occasional accompaniment.

Now we can contemplate the prospect in pleasant leisure, whilst our eye ranges like an eagle over sea, and earth, and sky.

To the north, the Mediterranean spreads away in a blue as profound as the heavens that overarch it; and its expanse, too, is varied with its own light clouds of foam. Beneath us, in the offing, a proud English frigate and some French and Austrian men-of-war lie at anchor, like watch-dogs over the large flock of merchantmen, with their white sails loosened, that lie nearer to the shore. The bay is bordered to the right by the magnificent array of the Lebanon mountains, rising from the sea, in which their various hills, glens, and even crag-perched villages, are reflected. Each of those acclivities has a little tract of richly-coloured vegetation hanging from its shoulders like a tartan cloak, and wears a fortress for its crown. From the golden sands below, to the snowy tracts above, the Druse and Maronite districts may be traced as on a map. In front of us appears the thin smoke of the city, surrounded by such of the picturesquely-ruined castles and fortifications as the British artillery has spared, with encampments of green and yellow tents at intervals amongst the groves outside the walls. The consular flags of almost every European nation are gaily fluttering over the flat-roofed town within, whose monotony is diversified with tower, and mosque, and minaret. Around us, upon gentle slopes and many terraces, are groves of the fig-tree, the ilex, and the sycamore. Here and there, a small palm-tree waves its plumy head; hedges of neighbouring cactus, with their fat, fantastic leaves, enclose gardens of small mulberry and pomegranate trees; olives, melons, and cucumbers. The water's edge flings a creamy foam upon black rocks, frequently showing traces of edifices of the ancient city that have long since crumbled into gravel. And over all this is spread a chameleon sky, shot with every conceivable colour, that seems as if Iris were weaving some gorgeous canopy for sunset, so rapidly do the colours, which are her web and woof, industriously come and go.

I went one day on board the Vernon frigate to meet Prince Albert of Prussia, whom I had seen last in Nubia, and Prince K., whom I had met at Thebes. The former was a fine, military-looking man, and the latter a most accomplished and agreeable person. They examined every department of this noble frigate, and the men went through all their war exercises with as much precision as the works of a watch. There is something very imposing in those rapid, energetic, and combined movements, that are carried on in profound silence, except from the tumult arising from the ponderous and crashing engines that they wield so lightly.

The next day I took Prince K. in my boat to the "Nahr el Kelb," or Dog River; a stream that issues from a picturesque ravine about nine miles from Beyrout, on the road to Tripoli. The sea ran high, and the wind was as much as our little craft could stagger under as we ran along in the shadow of the Lebanon. On rounding a bold headland, a new scene disclosed itself. A deep valley opened in the very heart of the mountains, and from its green and pleasant gloom the bright little river we were in search of flashed suddenly into light; the steep hills that formed its banks were covered with dark shrubs below, and grey crags above, and crowned with a Maronite convent. A beautiful ruined aqueduct, tapestried with ivy and flowering parasites, ran along the base of the mountain; and a picturesque old bridge, shaped like a chevron, terminated the view; on the shore stood a khan, that rather resembled a bower, so thickly was it covered with vines and shaded by trees. The entrance to this fairy spot was guarded from the angry sea by masses of black rocks, which have given name to the Dog River from their resemblance to that animal. The heavy surf beat out its purple masses into a filigree of foam upon the beach, and there appeared to be no possibility of entering that secluded glen. For a few moments we lay-to, waiting for a "seventh wave;" then out flew the oars, and, bowered in spray, upheaved upon a mountain-billow, we bounded over the bar, and by a

sudden and strange transition, floated into the calm river out of the stormy sea.

We found here some officers of the Vernon, who had ridden round to meet us; their carpet was spread under the shade of spreading sycamores, and we were soon reposing upon it in placid enjoyment of our chibouques, while the Syrian servants bustled about preparations for dinner. The horses were tethered in the shade, and our little boat lay moored by the silvery beach, over which a mountain cascade skipped, and laughed in concert with ourselves.

We dined merrily together on kid from the mountain, and omelettes made with herbs that grew wild about us; the wine was cooled in the cascade, and the coffee mingled its pleasant perfume with that of the aromatic shrubs on which it was boiling. Pipes, coffee, mountain-breezes, wild flowers' scents, superb scenery, sparkling torrents, neighing horses, the sea's deep roar, and a joyous party, made us think that the monks might have pleasant times of it, after all, notwithstanding that this Eden of theirs was Eveless.

This was the site of the ancient Lycopolis, or Wolf-city; but there are few or no remains of it except the aqueduct, and the name, degenerated as it is, into its canine appellation. On the rocks, however, that line the steep pathway, are some very curious figures and inscriptions, purporting that the warlike array of Egyptians, Persians, and Romans, had in their turn passed by: Sesostris, Cambyses, and Aurelian, had been before us.

Another day, I went to dine at some distance from Beyrout, with a British officer of distinguished birth and gallantry, who has married a Maronite lady of great beauty, and settled in her country. After an hour's gallop over the rocky promontory on which Beyrout is situated, through lanes of cactus and gardens, alternating with sandy tracts, and groups of pine-trees, I arrived at a picturesque cottage, commanding a noble view of the Lebanon. I was sitting on the divan with my courteous host, smoking our chibouques and talking about England, when his bride entered, dressed in her beautiful Arabian costume and still more beautiful smiles. I no longer wondered that he had abandoned his career, fame, fortune, everything in such a cause. After dinner, dressed and served in Arab style, we adjourned to take our pipe and coffee on the house-top, where we passed a most pleasant hour. The sun was setting in great glory on the sea, bathing the Lebanon in a flood of golden light like that of Raphael's Transfiguration.

On each side of the peninsula on which we stood, two fine bays swept gracefully away to the right and left, till the eye reached Tripoli on the North, and Tyre on the South. What a wide range of associations did every glance flung over that sacred region give birth to? But the beautiful present absorbed the past, and we had then no thought but for what fell upon the eye or ear. The soft evening hour had brought out each Syrian family to their house-tops, and the gardens round were thickly inhabited. From every terraced roof rose the faint clouds of the chibouque; blue, red, and purple dresses, glittered on every group that was gathered round us, with the veil-enfolded horns of the matrons, or the black tresses of the maidens sparkling with golden coins. And the music of merry voices was heard from far and near, with sometimes a strain of song, or the tinkle of a guitar; and the sea made its own solemn music on the distant shore, and the whole scene was one of perfect harmony, and peace, and beauty.

When the stars came out, W.* and I walked slowly home together, bridle in hand, over cliff, and through forest; and, after the inevitable parting pipe at my cottage, I saw his boat bear him off over the star-spangled water to his ship.

Let not the reader suppose that these descriptions are exaggerated: on the contrary, language can very feebly describe the perpetual poetry of Eastern life.

The traveller is fortunate who can procure a cottage to himself in the environs of Beyrout: the hotel in the town is dirty and disagreeable, but there is now a tolerably clean and comfortable boarding-house in the environs. For those who have any time to spare, few places in the East offer so desirable a resting-place as this beautiful city, combining with such healthiness, and so many resources, such opportunities of acquiring information.

My cottage lay about two hundred paces from the sea, to which a broad path ran through the gardens. A platform of rocks jutted out into the water, which was so clear that you could see the fish swimming fathom deep below the surface, and so deep, that a ship might lie moored alongside. All Beyrout seemed to be perpetually bathing in this delicious sea, notwithstanding the sharks, to whose presence one becomes as easily accustomed as to that of the crocodiles: little pyramids of red, and blue, and white garments, were to be seen all along the shore, and the shaved heads of their owners dotting the surface of the water. In the East, people seem to swim as instinctively as if they were amphibious; little children, as soon as they can sprawl upon the ground, are to be seen kicking among the waves, and the men are

* The Hon. Frederic W—., R.N., by whom I hope this evening and our other excursions are as vividly and pleasantly remembered as by me.

the best swimmers I ever saw. They have always one arm out of the water, advanced in front, and alternating with the other, which sweeps the water towards them, and this method at least doubles the pace that our style of swimming ever accomplishes.

It was with considerable difficulty I obtained admittance into the silk-worm sheds, as, though they belonged for the most part to Christians, those who tended them were Moslems, and thought the presence of a Frank brought bad luck to the establishment. In these sheds, which are lightly constructed of cane or reeds, and thatched to keep out the sun, there is a number of light shelves arranged all round, on which the silkworms are placed, with quantities of fresh mulberry leaves, on which they feed voraciously. Having thus gorged in idleness during their youth, they are forced to labour in abstinence in their age. About the middle of May they cease to feed, and are removed from the shelves to dry bushes. Upon these they set to work industriously, and weave a cloud of the most delicate silken tissue, surrounding an elaborately wrought shroud in which they lay their eggs, and then quietly lie down and die. The silken fabric thus answers the double purpose of a cradle and a grave, and its constructors devote almost their whole lives, like the pyramid building Pharaohs, to this laudable preparation for their deaths.

This shroud is called a cocoon; and the greater number of the girls in the neighbourhood employ their time in unravelling the silk of which it is woven, and then washing and winding it for exportation. It is never sorted, and there is some other defect in its preparation, which prevents it from obtaining so high a price as the silk of Lombardy. The eggs are carefully laid by until the following spring, when they are hatched chiefly in women's bosoms, which are only covered, I believe, during this process of incubation. When hatched they become worms, and feed on mulberries, and their round of life, and labour, and death, commences and terminates as did that of their ancestors.

Silk is the most important article of commerce that Beyrout possesses; it is of course heavily oppressed by Turkish imposts, but only about one-fourth of that which is produced pays duty. The smugglers conduct the principal trade, and their flotillas almost nightly run into the mountain bays, which no Turkish patrol ventures to approach.

I now prepared to start for Jerusalem, the great end and aim of every pilgrimage; at Beyrout I was only on the borders of the Holy Land, and considered every day lost that was deducted from my progress in the interior. On the 26th of May I started. It is the invariable practice in the East to make but a short journey the first day, encamping near the city in order to supply the omission of any of the voluminous requisites of a style of travelling in which you carry your hotel with you.

I passed the morning in taking leave of friends on board the Vernon, and in the city; and about two o'clock in the afternoon, my servant announced that he was at length ready to depart. My little caravan consisted of two luggage horses, on one of which sat the muleteer, with a bundle of pistols and daggers stuck in his capacious belt. His costume consisted of a red cap wrapped round with a Damascus shawl, a pair of petticoat trowsers, red slippers, and a faded jacket covered with still more faded embroidery. The first horse carried the tent on one side, the canteen and cooking-apparatus on the other, and some portmanteaus in the middle. The second was covered with mats, cloaks, carpets, leathern water-bottles, and Yussef, the muleteer. My servant, a young Syrian Christian, was very handsome, and dandified in proportion: with a dress resembling that of the muleteer, only of more elegant fashion, and more gaudy colours. He carried a brace of pistols on the high pommel of his Turkish saddle, a formidable sabre by his side, and my gun slung over his shoulder. A spare turban for great occasions, and a change of such linen as he could carry in his pocket, were his only luggage, besides those unfailing concomitants, arms, and a water-bottle. These two men were my only companions for many weeks upon the road, except when a timid merchant or a wild Bedouin joined suspicious company for a mile or two, or a khan afforded gossip and coffee for half an hour. I must not omit to mention, in the list of my companions, a docile Arab horse, the most useful, indefatigable, and only uncomplaining one amongst them all. I had purchased him soon after my arrival in Syria; he had become as familiar as a dog during my stay at Beyrout, and when I was obliged to leave him invalided at Jerusalem, I felt as if I was parting with a tried old friend. All the other horses were hired, and their forage provided by their owner, who generally made use of whatever fields we happened to encamp near for the purpose. He was a patient, good-tempered fellow, and preserved that character for strict honesty so peculiar to his class, amongst a nation of thieves. It is a curious principle in human nature, that men are always more true to their collective than to their individual responsibility. Remove a disorderly soldier to a well-disciplined regiment, and he becomes exemplary—convert a gossiping Venetian into a gondolier, and he becomes discreet—promote a thievish Arab into a muleteer's place, and he will straightway become an honest man.

Our way led along a narrow pathway, bordering on the sea as far as Beyrout, which we entered under a fortified gate where Turkish sentries were posted. The town itself is a confused labyrinth of lanes and alleys, that sometimes expand into a market-place, or at least some space wide enough to afford passage for two abreast. Towards the sea there are several cafés, open in front, filled with sailors, Arnaouts, Turks, and a few Syrians of the lower classes. There are also some mercantile houses here, whose clerks, bales of merchandize, and handbarrows, impart something of a European air to the quays. The streets are steep and ill-paved, or covered with flags, that afford uncertain footing even to an Arab horse. A strong-looking wall with battlements surrounds the town and about 10,000 inhabitants. Beyrout is situated on the isthmus of a finely undulated promontory, and, in the valley that lies between that promontory and the mountains, spreads one of the richest and most varied tracts of verdure in the world. Gardens, groves, the gleams of a winding river, white cottages half covered by creeping shrubs, lanes of flowering cactus, alternating tracts of yellow sands, and clumps of pine-trees, afford a delightful range for the searching eye; while the sea terminates each vista to the north and south, and the Lebanon towers grandly to the East. To the West, as we pass along this valley, are visible the houses of the resident Franks, who add the comforts of the West to the picturesqueness and luxury of the East. Their galleries are open towards the mountain, and, giaours as they are, they are often to be seen sitting in their verandahs, or reposing on their terraces, enjoying the fragrant weed that intensifies their perception of its beauties.

Leaving on the left this splendid view, together with the scene of St. George's exploit with the dragon, and a Turkish general holding his divan in an open tent pitched upon the parade ground outside the city, I bade farewell for the present to Beyrout.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### DJOUNI, AND LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan
Beneath yon mountain's ever-beauteous brow;
But now, as though a thing unblest by man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow,
To halls deserten, portals gaping wide;
Fresh lessons to th' unthinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasaunces by life supplied,
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide!
BYRON.

AFTER proceeding for some time through a narrow lane, the banks of which were thickly clotted with cactus, we emerged into the romantic pine-forest about which Lamartine has written such pretty rhapsodies. An open space of bright soft sand shoots pathways in every direction through the shade, whose pleasant gloom soon terminates their vistas. At the foot of each old tree is a little circular carpet of verdure, looking at a distance like the shadow of its pine. The majestic groves of older growth, intermingled with the tender green of the young plantations, canopy the whole region around with a various and chequered shade. The caravans pass along noiselessly on the soft verdure or the yielding sand; not a sound is heard but that of the far-off sea, and the faint rustle of the branches. Through the deep foliage, a view of the impending Lebanon occasionally breaks, and cool breezes, that seem to have their home here, wander inquisitively about each natural bower and shady nook. The glades, and banks, and pathways, and arenas, present the very scene that romance would select for the warrior's or the lover's delectation, for "passages of arms," or of poetry.

About an hour from the city (we measure distance here by time) you pull up at a pretty khan, where a trough of water quenches your horse's glowing nostrils, and you can ask your way, and light your pipe.* Thence by sandy paths, and rocky tracks, and two or three flat-roofed villages, whose inhabitants sit spinning silk in the shade of rustic colonnades; and then we reach the shore, bordered by thick jungle, or rocky steeps. As the sun went down, we came to the river Damour, and encamped there for the night. Our tent and fire, and the stream that ran at our feet, supplied all our wants; but some hundred yards off there was a khan, in and round which a noisy party of travellers were waiting for the cool of morning to pursue their journey.

I rose about midnight, and took a stroll in the moonlight along the shore, when I found that the horses were tethered to the legs of the servants, instead of to their usual peg, by way of a precautionary measure in this thievish district. The men were sleeping

* These khans afford a mere temporary shelter to travellers in this part of Syria, while in the south east, and in Egypt, they are of immense extent, and form receptacles for whole caravans, that bring hither their own forage and provisions. In the latter case, they are frequently called "caravan-serai"—"serai," or seraglio, meaning a *palace* or *large* house. In the former instance, of which I speak here, the khan is a sort of public-house, which generally supplies barley for horses; and pipes, coffee, sour milk, and water-melons for their riders. They are scattered along the road at about half-days' journeys, or from ten to fifteen miles apart.

beside the fire under the open sky, which in summer appears to be considered quite canopy enough for Syrians.

The next morning, as the sun rose over the Lebanon, we were in motion. The scattered appendages of a night's encampment require a marvellously short space of time to become condensed into the luggage pile of the sumpter-horses, and a spot of ashes only remains to mark where we rested for the night. We passed for some miles through mulberry gardens, and over a dangerous rocky pass, where Antiochus the Great defeated the Egyptians, in 218 B.C. This pass would have required the best exertions and courage of a European horse, yet a file of camels was ascending it with the same patient look that they wear in their native deserts. Though forced frequently to traverse mountains in a country whose whole commerce is conducted by their means, these animals are only at their ease upon the sandy plain. The Arabs say, that if you were to ask a camel which he preferred—travelling up or down hill, his answer would be, "May the curse of Allah light on both!"

We forded the river Damour, which runs into the sea from a beautiful valley among banks and islands thickly strewn with oleander. In about two hours I halted under the shade of a sycamore, to wait for some officers of the Vernon, who had promised to accompany me as far as Djouni on my Jerusalem way.

Near us was a khan, whence we procured barley and water for our horses, and eggs, milk, and fire for our cooking. Mats and carpets were spread in the shade; macaroni and coffee boiling on a fire of dried branches; wild dogs were every now and then peering through the trees attracted by the smell of savoury meat; and our horses were feeding under the shelter of some olives. A cheer was soon heard, and four sailors were seen galloping along the shores like mad, impatient to rally round the fire whose smoke above the trees announced its friendly offices beneath. Ample justice being done to the banquet, we were soon in the saddle once more, and sweeping along over hill, and vale, and rock, and sandy bay, until we came in sight of the venerable city of Sidon. Contenting ourselves with one glimpse of this finely-situated town, spread out upon a promontory, we turned off to the left towards the mountains. Thence, our path led through mulberry and olive groves, now touching at a hamlet, and then branching off along a river's banks spanned with antique bridges and overhung with pleasant shade.

The road thenceforth winding along a deep ravine, now over a mountain's brow, was only a steep and rocky path, which in England a goat would be considered active if he could traverse. Our horses, nevertheless, went along it at a canter, though the precipice sometimes yawned beneath our outside stirrup, while the inner one knocked fire out of the rocky cliff. The ground not unfrequently gave way the moment the hoof had left it, and plunged into the chasm far below. The views were fine and various; deep, rich valleys, sprinkled occasionally with a flat-roofed cottage, a vineyard, or a mill; a capricious stream, gliding or rushing along under its oleander shade; steep hills, speckled with grey crags, or overgrown with the bay-tree and the myrtle; here and there a town, with a very fortress look, crowned some steep acclivity; or, a wood of sycamore gloomed over the pale rocks.

Our servants and guides were left far behind, and we rashly trusted ourselves to the guidance of two of the party, who had frequently visited Djouni before. These wild pilots thought a new road would be a pleasant variety; and, as if the legitimate path were not difficult enough, they led us along the dry bed of a mountain torrent, which, to say the truth, differed little in appearance from the highway. It was even more picturesque, however, running between steep cliffs of every colour, festooned with innumerable shrubs, and towering high above our heads: deep caverns seamed the rocks, and peaks of distant mountains, here and there, appeared terminating some chasmed vista. Rocks, tumbled from the mountain, lay strewn about, and nearly choked up the narrow river-bed; over these we scrambled, climbed, and leapt in a manner that only Arab horses would attempt or could accomplish. At length, after two hours of desperate jumps and neck-or-nothing scrambles, we were brought to a fair stand-still at a precipice that would have baffled the most enterprising monkey. Hence we were obliged to retrace our steps with yet greater difficulty than we had advanced; our horses frequently fell, and, like ourselves, were covered with wounds and bruises, and exhausted with thirst and exertion.

It was late when we regained the path, and came in sight of two high, conical hills, on one of which stands the village of Djouni, on the other a circular wall over which dark trees were waving; and this was the place in which Lady Hester Stanhope had finished her strange and eventful career. It had been formerly a convent, but the Pasha of Acre had given it to the "prophet-lady," who had converted its naked walls into palaces, and its wilderness into gardens.

The sun was setting as we entered the enclosure, and we were soon scattered about the outer court, picketting our horses, rubbing

down their foaming flanks, and washing out their wounds. The buildings that constituted the palace were of a very scattered and complicated description, covering a wide space, but only one story in height; courts and gardens, stables and sleeping-rooms, halls of audience and ladies' bowers, were strangely intermingled. Heavy weeds were growing everywhere among the open portals, and we forced our way with difficulty through a tangle of roses and jasmine to the inner-court. Here fountains once played in marble basins, and choice flowers bloomed; but now it presented a scene of the most melancholy desolation. As the watch-fire blazed up, its gleam fell upon masses of honeysuckle and woodbine; on white, mouldering walls beneath, and dark, waving trees above; while the group of mountaineers who gathered round its light, with their long beards and vivid dresses, completed the strange picture.

The clang of sword and spur resounded through the long galleries; horses neighed among boudoirs and bowers; strange figures hurried to and fro among the colonnades, shouting in Arabic, English, and Italian; the fire crackled, the startled bats flapped their heavy wings, and the growl of distant thunder filled up the pauses in the wild concert.

Our dinner was spread on the floor in Lady Hester's favourite apartment; her death-bed was our sideboard, her furniture our fuel, her name our conversation. Almost before the meal was ended, two of our party had dropped asleep over their trenchers from fatigue: the Druses had retired from the haunted precincts to their village, and W——, L——, and I went out into the garden to smoke our pipes by Lady Hester's lonely tomb. Here we sat, and mused, and moralized to an extent that few would have given that wild party credit for, on seeing the pipes and the old teapot of brandy-and-water, that looked somewhat out of place in that romantic scene. About midnight we fell asleep upon the ground, wrapped in our capotes; and dreamed of ladies, and tombs, and prophets, till the neighing of our horses announced the dawn.

After a hurried breakfast on fragments of the last night's repast, we strolled out over the extensive gardens. Here many a broken arbour and trellis, bending under masses of jasmine and honeysuckle, show the care and taste that were once lavished on this wild but beautiful hermitage. A garden-house, surrounded by an enclosure of roses run wild, lies in the midst of a grove of myrtle and bay-trees. This was Lady Hester's favourite resort during her lifetime, and now within its silent enclosure,

"After life's fitful fever, she sleeps well."

The hand of ruin has dealt very sparingly with all these interesting relics; the Pasha's power by day, and the fear of spirits by night, keep off marauders; and, though *we* made free with broken benches and fallen doorposts for fuel, we reverently abstained from displacing anything in the establishment, except a few roses, which there was no living thing but bees and nightingales to regret.

This is one of the most striking and interesting spots I ever visited. Its silence and beauty, its richness and desolation, lent to it a touching and mysterious character that suited well the memory of that strange hermit-lady, who made it a place of pilgrimage even in Palestine.

Lady Hester Stanhope was niece to Mr. Pitt, and seems to have possessed or acquired something of his indomitable energy and proud self-reliance during the time that she presided over his household. Soon after his death she left England, and there is a legend current that attributes to the saddest event connected with Corunna's mournful victory the cause of her self-exile. I quote the following extracts from the author of "Eöthen," who knew her well.

"I can hardly tell why it should be, but there is a longing for the East, very commonly felt by proud-hearted people when goaded by sorrow. Lady Hester obeyed this impulse: for some time, I believe, she was at Constantinople, where her magnificence and near alliance to the great minister gained her considerable influence. Afterwards she passed into Syria.*

"The people of this country, excited by the achievements of Sir Sidney Smith, had begun to imagine the possibility of their land being occupied by the English, and many of them looked upon Lady Hester as a princess, who came to prepare the way for the expected conquest.

"The prestige created by the rumours of her high and undefined rank, as well as of her wealth and corresponding magnificence, was well sustained by her imperious character and her dauntless bravery. Her influence increased. I never heard anything satisfactory as to the real extent or duration of her sway; but it seems that, for a time, at least, she certainly exercised something like sovereignty amongst the wandering tribes. And

* In the New Monthly Magazine for January, February, March, and April, 1843, there are some very interesting letters from Lady H. Stanhope. They are full of character, and the energy which characterized her through life. She appears, at first, to have been as much surprised as pleased at the impression she made upon the Turks and Arabs. It is melancholy to observe the difference in her letter to Sir Gore Ouseley twenty-four years later, when solitude and excitement had disturbed her strong mind.

afterwards when, through the failure of the wealth that she lavished with so liberal a hand, 'her earthly kingdom' had passed away, she strove for spiritual power, and impiously dared, as it was whispered, to boast some mystic union with the very God of very God!"

I have not space to follow this eloquent author through all the interesting details of his visit to the prophet-lady. He is one of the very few who had ever been admitted to anything like familiar intercourse with this strange spirit during her Syrian seclusion,* and the task of describing her could not have fallen into abler hands. I shall only add that she believed in magic, astrology, and, incredible as it may appear, in her own divine mission. She had two mares, which were held sacred by herself and her attendants; one was singularly marked, even to deformity, by a natural saddle. This animal was never mounted, but reserved for some divinity whom she was to accompany on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The other was retained for her own "mount," on the same remarkable occasion.

A lady at Beyrout, as distinguished for her wit as for her beauty, told me that, on Lady Hester's death, she had purchased the divinely saddled mare, and that, had it been intended to carry the devil himself, it could not have been better chosen. No one being able to manage the pampered brute, it was sold for a trifle and lost sight of.

The Pasha of Acre presented Lady Hester with the deserted convent of Mar Elyas, which contains perhaps one hundred acres, on the summit of a steep hill; and here she established herself, surrounded by a guard of Albanians. Accompanied only by her doctor, an Italian secretary, and some female slaves, here she lived and died.

It is said that she was crowned Queen of the East at Palmyra by 50,000 Arabs. She certainly exercised despotic power in her neighbourhood on the mountain; and, what was perhaps the most remarkable proof of her talents, she prevailed on some Jews to advance large sums of money to her on her note of hand.†

* Although numbers visited the convent, her ladyship almost invariably refused admittance to strangers. She assigned as a reason the use which M. de Lamartine had made of his interview. Mrs. T., who passed some weeks at Djouni, told us, that, when Lady Hester read his account of this interview, she exclaimed, "It is all false; we did not converse together for more than five minutes: but, no matter—no traveller hereafter shall betray or forge my conversations with him."

† It should be mentioned to the honour of her family name that all her debts, however rashly contracted, have been paid, with the exception of the usurious interest demanded upon some of them.

Her personal appearance shortly before her death is thus described by the author I have previously quoted: "The large commanding features of the gaunt woman, then upwards of sixty years old, reminded me of her relative, the great statesman, that lay dying in the House of Lords, according to Copley's picture; her face was of the most astonishing whiteness; she wore a very large turban, which seemed to be of pale Cashmere shawls, so as entirely to conceal the hair; her dress, from the chin down to the point at which it was concealed by the drapery which she held over her lap, was a mass of white linen loosely folding—an ecclesiastical sort of affair, more like a surplice than any of those blessed creations which our souls love under the names of 'boddice,' and 'collar,' and 'habitshirt,' and sweet 'chemisette.' Such was the outward seeming of the personage that sat before me; and indeed, she was almost bound, by the fame of her actual achievement, as well as by her sublime pretensions, to look a little differently from the rest of womankind." *

All that I could gather from report I here subjoin in a letter, which I wrote at the time to the author of "Eothen," and which he has done me the honour to quote in his work:—

"Djouni, May, 1843.

"I reached this strange hermitage last night; and, though time, and some naval officers who accompanied me hither, are pressing my departure, I am too glad to find myself in a place which I am indebted to your description for having visited, to allow the opportunity of writing to you to pass by.

"How beautiful must have been this convent-palace when *you* saw it, its strange mistress doing its hospitalities, and exercising her self-won regal power!

"Lady Hester Stanhope appears to have carried things with a high hand in this curious country: a friend of mine has a letter from the Sultan to her beginning 'Cousin.' Mehemet Ali could make nothing of her. She annihilated a village for disobedience, and burned a mountain-chalet with all its inhabitants, on account of the murder of two French travellers, who had been under the protection of her Firman. She held on gallantly to the last; and, even when confined to her bed and dying, she sought for no companionship or comfort but such as she could find in her own powerful, though unmanageable mind.

"Mr. Moore, our consul at Beyrout, hearing she was ill, rode over the mountains, accompanied by Mr. Thomson, the American missionary, to visit her. It was evening when they arrived, and a profound silence

* "Eothen," p. 122.

was over all the palace; no one met them; they lighted their own lamps in the outer court, and passed unquestioned through court and gallery, until they came to where *she* lay. A corpse was the only inhabitant of the palace, and the isolation from her kind which she had sought so long was indeed complete. That morning, thirty-seven servants had watched every motion of her eye: but its spell once darkened by death, every one fled with such plunder as they could secure. A little girl, whom she had adopted and maintained for years, took her watch and some papers on which she set peculiar value. Neither the child nor the property were ever seen again. Not a single thing was left in the room where she lay dead, except the ornaments upon her person: no one had ventured to touch these, and even in death she seemed able to protect herself. At midnight, her countryman and the missionary carried her out by torchlight to a spot in the garden that had been formerly her favourite resort, and there they buried her."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### TYRE, SIDON, AND ACRE.

We wandered on to many a shrine,
By faith or ages made divine;
And then we visited each place
Where valour's deeds had left a trace;
Or sought the spots renowned no less
For Nature's lasting loveliness.
*The Troubadour, by* L. E. L.

THE road down the mountain was full of interest, and on reaching the plain we found a path that lay along the banks of a sparkling river, leading us out upon a finely curved and yellow-sanded shore. We galloped along these sands for several miles, and then entered Sidon, through a guardhouse and covered way filled with Turkish soldiers. We passed several groups along the shore that would each have made a highly-coloured painting. Those who have been struck by the picturesqueness of even gipsy encampments in England may fancy the amusement a wayfarer continually finds in a country where such life is universal; but in the latter, the long beards of the Moslem, the gay colours of their dresses, and the trowsered women, with their various veils and turbans, infinitely diversify the groups.

Sidon is as irregularly built, and has streets as narrow, and as much varied by bazaars, and cafés, and stables, as the other oriental towns I have endeavoured so often to describe. Its fortifications offered considerable resistance to the Anglo-Austrian-Turkish army in the late siege. The Archduke Ferdinand was the first to enter the breach when effected on the land side, and was well seconded in his attack by the fire of the British fleet.

There are some remains of Fakreddin's palace, standing out into the sea, and only connected with the town by a long and narrow bridge. A body of Turkish troops had been thrown into this palace, but hesitated to advance along the bridge, swept as it was by the fire of the Egyptian troops. A mate on board one of the English steamers, named Cummins, observed their hesitation, and entreated permission from his commanding officer to land and lead them. It was granted with some difficulty; the young sailor pulled to the palace in the dingey, leapt ashore, and called on the Turks with a cheer to follow him. He sprang upon the bridge under a shower of balls, and was half way across it before his infidel allies dared to follow him. They came on then with the bayonet, and the western town was won. This was told to me by one of the officers of the Vernon riding by my side, who omitted to mention that his own forehead had been laid open by a bullet while gallantly leading another attack on the same place, from which he escaped by a miracle. A braver or more amusing fellow than this same M—— never maintained old Ireland's character for gallantry and honour, wherever he may go.

We established ourselves in a sort of inn, in a corner of an immense caravanserai, on one side of which some twenty or thirty handsome horses, belonging to the Emir Bescheer, were standing in the open air. They were all picketted by the near fore-foot to their feeding trough (there are no mangers here) and by the off-hind-foot to a peg about two yards behind them.

We dined together in the khan, and then, though evening was closing in, my four naval friends set off at a gallop to ride to Beyrout in the dark. The distance was about thirty miles, along a pathway as rough as ever tried in vain to daunt a traveller, but all this only afforded additional zest to their undertaking. One of their horses was obliged to be left at Sidon, and another died on their way back, but both these high-mettled brutes showed game to the last.

I found myself once more alone in a white-washed, dirty apartment, with only my carpet for a bed; but three days' hard travel, and almost sleepless nights, made even this seem luxury: I lay down in my capote, and slept for fourteen hours.

Sidon is called Saida in the language of the country. It contains about 7000 inhabitants, the greater number of whom are Moslems, the remainder Jews, Maronites, and Greek Christians. Until the time of Fakred-

din, it had a good port, but that Emir filled all the harbours along the coast, in order to prevent the Sultan's fleets from anchoring here, when he revolted from his authority. The citadel is said to have been built by Louis XI., and commands a fine view of the orchards and gardens, diversified with country-houses, that ornament the environs. The principal trade of the town, consisting of silk, cotton, and nutgalls, has been transferred of late years to Beyrout.

Sidon is the most ancient Phœnician city; mention is made of it in the Pentateuch and Homer. It was assigned to the tribe of Asher, in the division of the Promised Land by Joshua, but never was subdued by them.

For wealth, commerce, luxury, vice, and power, it was unequalled in the Levant, until Tyre outstripped it, and Salmaneser conquered it. Thence it passed successively under the rule of the Persians, Macedonians, Syrians, Egyptians, Romans, Arabs, and Crusaders. It was an opulent city at the time when Christ visited its territory, and it sent a bishop to the council of Nice in 325. Its destruction was accomplished by Melek Adel, the brother of Saladin, in 1197, from which it only partially recovered at intervals, to be as often destroyed.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Fakreddin restored it to considerable importance, and rendered it the seaport of Damascus, whence it is distant only three days' journey. Sidon, after this, became almost a colony of the French, but they were driven out by Djezzar Pasha in 1791, and, since then, no European vessels ever approach its dangerous coast.*

Early the next morning, the 29th of May, I started for Tyre, which, seated on a peninsula, soon became visible from the coast along which I rode. The way was profoundly lonely: I did not meet a living creature thoughout the day, except some Syrian girls, who drew water for me at a well near Sidon.

As evening closed in, I found myself on a wide, solitary plain, whose rank savannahs were only diversified by a dark and almost stagnant river. This is the Liettani, the Leontes of ancient times, which waters the vale of Baaelbec. Heavy clouds were hanging on the horizon, thunder muttered ominously among the distant hills, bull-frogs were croaking harshly on the banks, and the scene was one of utter desolation. Fording the stream where it reached my saddle-bow, I spurred on to the ruins of a Saracenic castle which commanded the passage of the river. Entering under a low, vaulted passage, I found myself in the courtyard of a ruin that seemed to be the very model of a robber's haunt: dark caverns and gloomy vaults appeared in every direction; the old walls of the donjon towered over my head, and there probably was no living man outside its walls, except my own servants, for ten miles round. I did not much like the appearance of the place or the look of two armed Arabs whom I found here; but there was no help for it then. I flung the rein of my horse to one of the strangers to be led about, and ordered the other to make a fire instantly, as I sat down upon a fallen column, and lighted my pipe. The assumption of authority generally confers the possession of it in a country where every one is unknown to his neighbour, and where the keenest sword or surest pistol has the best claim to temporary power. The Arabs looked at each other for a moment, then set themselves about obeying the orders of their extempore commander; my horse was cool, and a cheerful fire blazing, when my servants arrived.

We kept watch by turns during the night, having shared our evening meal with the Arabs, who seemed to prowl about all night; the next morning I was cantering along the sands to Tyre, before the sun rose upon that ill-favoured castle.

Passing the ruins of an aqueduct on the left, and some columns of granite on the right, along the shore, I came to the isthmus by which Alexander connected the mainland with the island, in order to invest the city which then occupied the latter. The original Tyre seems to have been built upon the continent. It was founded by a Sidonian colony, 240 years before the building of Solomon's Temple, to which its king, Hiram, largely contributed. This city has dearly purchased its celebrity, having been besieged by Salmanaser, Nebuchadnezzar, and Alexander; Antigonus, the Romans, the Saracens, and Crusaders; Egyptians, Turks, and finally by the English.

Tyre was visited by Christ and by St. Paul; it became a Christian bishopric in very early times. In the fourth century, Jerome speaks of it as the finest city in Phœnicia; and the Venetians held it for many years after the Crusades, partly restoring its character for commerce, wealth, and manufactures.

I confess I was disappointed in its appearance. Its strength and beauty of position, and even its desolation, were less than I had expected. It is an ugly, little, matter-of-fact town, containing perhaps 5000 inhabitants, of the usual squalid but contented, or rather resigned, appearance. The buildings occupy the northern side of the peninsula, and on the southern side there

* Robinson, vol. iii. p. 416.

are some rocks lonely enough for "fishermen to dry their nets upon;" but Ezekiel's prophecy was accomplished probably many years ago.

As Palæ Tyrus was probably the only city in existence here at the time the prophecy was uttered, "that Tyre shall be utterly destroyed and never rebuilt," it is evident that it could not allude to the present town, which has been rebuilt at least nine times. The ancient city probably was called Palæ Tyrus only for distinction, when the modern town arose; the former has been ingeniously argued to have occupied a space about a mile from the shore, wherein the steep rock marks the site of the citadel.* The author, to whom I have referred below, gives an interesting account of the Tyrian purple, and the mode of preparing it.

From Tyre, the way lies along the seashore, on which I overtook some Bedouin Arabs, with whom I joined company for a few miles. They were wild looking as it is possible for man to be, but civil after their fashion, and very friendly. They wore a sort of cloak of very coarse brown and white striped wool, wide cotton drawers, and faded red slippers stuck into shovel stirrups. Their heads were shaved, and covered with turbans, but no razor seemed ever to have approached their lips or chins. Besides a brace of pistols and a dagger in his belt, each carried a sabre, and a spear about ten feet long, with a tuft of ostrich feathers fluttering round the steel head. They spoke with great respect of Ibrahim Pasha, cursed the Turks, and said that the English were "taib," very good. From this shore starts up a bold range of hills, extending far into the sea, called anciently the "Promontorium Album." Passing over this, we came in view of a wide and fertile plain, with the town and fortress of Acre in the distance, relieved off the heights of Mount Carmel, which terminated the sea-ward view.

We descended to this plain by a very steep and difficult path, called formerly "The ladder of Tyre," and then traversed the plain for some hours. It was only partially cultivated, the greater part consisting of grassy tracts tufted with rushes, and occasionally sheltered by groups of trees under which shepherds lay watching their flocks. A few villages were scattered widely apart, each with a large walled enclosure to guard their cattle in at night from the foraging Bedouin.

As the evening approached, the plain grew very lonely, though I met some shepherds anxiously hurrying their herds homeward. The country round wore an Arcadian appearance, and the evening was calm and beautiful, but anxiety and fear were depicted in every countenance we met. We soon learned there had been a battle on the plain the day before, and the people were hourly expecting a renewal of hostilities from the Bedouin who had been repulsed. One or two of these wild horsemen had passed me at a gallop, and I met several more in a body soon afterwards. They drew up along the path as I approached, but, though they did not offer the usual salutation, they permitted me to pass unquestioned. I then pulled up to wait for my servants, and, offering them some tobacco, entered into conversation with their leader.

These fellows always appear on a journey as if they were going to war; and indeed these occupations are almost synonymous with tribes "whose hand is against every man's." When they *do* go to war, there is nothing in their outward appearance that displays any change from their most peaceful guise. Their wild fierce eyes, and screaming voices, and vehement gestures, made them anything but agreeable company, especially towards nightfall; and it was with no slight feeling of release I heard their "salaam," as I rode off to overtake my baggage-horses, which had now passed by.

The muleteer declared that it was certain destruction to encamp near the highway, under the circumstances; and we wandered considerably out of our track in search of a village where we could get food for our horses. At length we came to a lone farmhouse just at nightfall, round which was a sort of fortification, consisting of a wall twenty feet high. Within this enclosure numerous flocks and herds were collected, as we could gather from the bleating and lowing that had attracted us to the spot. The tent was soon pitched, and the horses picketted, when the muleteer proceeded to the farm, to make search for barley, straw, and milk; there was no answer to his repeated applications at the gate, though we could hear voices whispering within, and he announced liberal offers in a loud voice. Our horses had had nothing to eat since morning, however, and it became absolutely necessary to feed them; so my servant and I added through the key-hole our solicitations — which were equally ineffectual. Only one method of admission remained; I sent a bullet through the lock of a wicket, which instantly flew open, and my servant and I entered with as angry countenances as if it had been *our* door that was broken open.

* See "Narrative of a Voyage along the Shores of the Mediterranean," &c., by W. R. Wild. Dublin: Curry, 1840. A valuable and spirited work, which does credit to its author both as a Christian and a scholar. It contains the best description of Tyre and Jerusalem that I am acquainted with.

We were met by an old man and two or three women, whose words were instantly overborne by a torrent of abuse from my servant, who declared that the bearer of the Sultan's firman had been insulted by their inhospitality, and that, instead of receiving pay for their vile goods, they ought to have their house burned over their heads, their beards shaved off to adorn jackasses.* The old man very meekly observed that they had neither milk nor eggs, and only a very little straw. "Dog of an unbeliever!" shouted the dragoman, gaining courage as he saw he had produced an effect, "dost thou keep 10,000 bulls, that we are deafened by all this lowing! and does all thy poultry consist only of cocks, that thou mayest starve the Sultan's friends!" While this conversation was going on, an Arab stole forward to listen, as he thought unperceived, but, seizing him by his belt, I dragged him into the middle of the room. "Behold," I observed to him, "this is an old man, and these are women, but *you* must give us barley and milk; this money, *or*—this kurbash shall be your payment." Instantly a large jar of milk and an earthen bowl of barley were eagerly presented to us by the women; all the blessings of Allah invoked upon our heads; and we departed with our prize through files of some seven or eight men who now appeared in all directions.

Our horses were fed, our supper eaten, and in half an hour I was seated quietly in the lately hostile farmhouse, smoking in the centre of a friendly circle as if I had been acquainted with them for years. A little powder for priming to the men, and a few trinkets to the women, raised me to the summit of popularity; when I retired to my tent for the night, my hand was covered with kisses, and Allah was entreated to take care that my shadow never should grow less.

This is a common specimen of Syrian life; the people, naturally kind and hospitable and generous, live in such perpetual fear and distrust of all around them that their character misrepresents itself, and the traveller must often perforce deal with them as his necessity, not his inclination, dictates.

The next morning, my tent was struck, and the horses loaded before sunrise; but, even then, a Syrian damsel came out of the fortification with a bowl of fresh milk as a free-will offering. I was not a little pleased when she refused payment for her courtesy, though it cost me a coral necklace to reward it.

As I rode towards Acre, I met many travellers, all armed to the teeth, and drawing close together as I approached, although alone. My people had gladly joined company with some other wayfarers; and as they were in enjoyment of security and society, I pushed on unattended towards the place of my destination.

I overtook a Bedouin, who was splendidly mounted, and seemed to welcome my arrival as a spectator of the prowess and beauty of his horse: the squalidness of his own appearance contrasted curiously with the proud carriage of the noble animal he rode, and the richness of his own arms. Observing my admiration, he dashed his sharp stirrups into his horse's flanks, flew forward, and wheeled round me at a gallop, whirling his tufted spear above his head with loud cries, and then pulling up short beside me. He was then in high good humour; he even praised *my* horse, and proceeded to eulogize the English and Ibrahim Pasha, who appears at present to be considered the hero of the East. We were then in sight of Acre, and I asked him if he remembered the English fleet. His countenance lighted up suddenly as if it reflected the magnificent explosion, and he exclaimed, "Ibrahim Pasha, taib, taib!" (*very good*) "pop! pop! pop!"—"Ingeleez, taib kheteer" (*excellent*)—"hoo! Bombe!" and, so saying, he shot his lance high into the air, to illustrate the explosion as compared with the Egyptian's fusillade.

We now approached the encampment of his tribe, which he pointed out to me at some distance from our path, and asked me to accompany him thither. I was obliged to decline the tempting invitation, and soon afterwards reached the still strong fortifications of Acre, where, they say, it will require ten years of labour to repair the effects of the English fire.

Ptolemais, Acre, or, as the Syrians call it, Akka, is imposing-looking from the outside; but within, it is poor, dirty, and irregularly built. Some hundred Turkish soldiers and many impressed peasants were at work upon the fortifications; but there was no other appearance of activity or life within its silent streets. I walked round the fortifications with the British consular agent, and could easily trace the effects of the bombardment.

Beyrout, Sidon, and Tyre, had been successively captured for the Turks by our squadron, under Commodore Napier, almost as rapidly as he could cruize along the coast. On the 3rd November, 1840, Admiral Stopford was joined by the Commodore off Acre, and, a flag of truce being rejected, they went to work at once. The town was commanded, and the artillery directed by Colonel Schultze, a Pole in Mehemet Ali's service. He was known in the Egyptian

* This is the usual style of address in this country from the stronger party; the expressions of civility are proportionately extravagant.

army as Youssef Aga, and had obtained considerable distinction in the Syrian war. He found the guns upon the fortifications very badly mounted; and, as the artillerymen were proportionately inefficient, he laid the guns himself so as to command the line of buoys placed at night by the British boats; these, he concluded, were to mark the stations that the ships were to occupy. Unfortunately for his plans, these buoys only marked the soundings—the path, and not the resting-places—of our gallant fleet. The powerful steam-frigates required no moorings—running in close under the walls, taking up their positions, and opening their fire with as much precision as so many batteries of horse-artillery. The rest of the squadron separated into two divisions, and opened a cross-fire from the north and south-west upon the town. The Phœnix, with the Admiral on board, began the action about noon, and plied her powerful artillery with such accuracy, that she cleared and dismounted every gun upon the fortifications, where her shot could find space enough in the embrazures to enter by. Then the cannonade became general. Many of our ships, especially the Castor frigate, were anchored within musket-shot; and the rattle of innumerable small arms filled up the momentary pauses left by the booming of a thousand guns.

The whole mass of the lofty fortifications appeared like one great volcanic mountain, enveloped in a pyramid of cloud-like smoke, through which the lightnings flashed, and the thunder pealed from every battlement and bastion. Each of the ships, too, was enveloped in its own sulphurous canopy of flame-pierced smoke, and surrounded the fiery promontory like a volcanic Cyclades in grand and universal eruption. The day was gloriously bright; and the volumes of white smoke-clouds reflected in the blue water, the blast of the bugles piercing through them, with the shout of the combatants, the boatswain's whistle from the shipping, and the glimpses of the magnificent scenery around, were described to me by an eyewitness as producing the grandest conceivable effect. The tremendous concert roared and swelled till it found its climax in the explosion of the powder magazine in the citadel of Acre, which threw a glare upon the distant hills through all the brilliant sunshine, and sent two thousand Egyptians in fragments to the skies. The batteries to the southward ceased then to fire, from want of hands to work the guns, but those to the northward were fought bravely to the last. In the night, however, the Egyptians evacuated the town; and on the following morning the British and their allies took undisputed possession of this most powerful fortress of the East.

It was not the strength of these fortifications, powerful as they then were, but the desperate resistance of the Turks, animated by British example, that beat back Napoleon from these walls. "Yonder is the key of the East," said he to Murat, as he sat down before Acre on the 18th of March, 1799.* When nine murderous but vain assaults, sixty days' suspense, and the ravages of the Plague, had "affoiblissé le moral du soldat" and avenged the wholesale massacre of Jaffa, the French retired from the siege, and entered Cairo under an arch of triumph!

But it is to the Crusades that Acre owes its chief interest. It was to them, as to Napoleon, the "Key of the East." Its old walls have echoed to the war-cry of the lion-hearted Richard, and the chivalrous Saladin; and there are few of our ancient English faimlies whose ancestors were not to be found among the Christian host under these beleaguered towers.

But I must not linger here; my work is already drawing to a close, and we have other scenes than those of war to visit; yet, ere we go, to use the language of one well acquainted with his theme, "Why not one sigh for the olden day, when the standard of England streamed from St. George's Mount, and the chivalry encamped around it, and the young knights stood and listened to Blondel's lay? But he who was to win the honoured name of d'Acre on the morrow sat apart from his companions, watching the sunset in the far West, where dwelt the lady of his love, his casque lying on the grass, and his steed feeding beside him." †

## CHAPTER XL.

### THE BIVOUAC, AND MOUNT CARMEL.

The hot sun shrinks from the land of the Kurd,
As the welcome cry to halt is heard.
Weary and faint were they who had striven,
Through the sultry hours when that sign was given:
From the courser's back each has loosed his rein,
And he feeds at will on the verdant plain,
Or drinks of the fount that is gushing by,
While the evening breeze wakes rejoicingly.
And Arab and Frank in brotherhood share
A luxurious rest in the perfumed air;
And that balmy sense of entire repose,
Which the trammelled spirit too seldom knows.

ANON.

I swear to thee, by my holy order, by the habit which I wear, by the Mountain of our blessed founder, Elias, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality.

*The Talisman.*

TOWNS in the East are so disagreeable, and

* "Expeditions en Egypt et en Syrie." Par J. Miot, 2d edition.

† Lord Lindsay's Letters.

have so few resources; the country is so beautiful and full of interest, that I always felt a lively pleasure in passing out from the guarded gates of some old city, to return to the tent, and the wild pathway of the plain or mountain. Travel in the East is the occupation of your whole time, not a mere passage from one place of residence to another. "Day after day, week after week, and month after month, your foot is in the stirrup. To taste the cold breath of the earliest morn, and to lead or follow your bright cavalcade till sunset through forests and mountain passes, through valleys and desolate plains—all this becomes your mode of life; and you ride, eat, drink, and curse the mosquitoes, as systematically as your friends in England eat, drink, and sleep. If you are wise, you do not look upon the long period of time thus occupied by your journeys as the mere gulphs which divide you from the place to which you are going; but rather, as most rare and beautiful portions of life, from whence may come thought, temper, and strength. Once feel this, and you will grow happy, and contented in your saddle home." *

Thus it is; the haunts of men become distasteful, and their habits irksome to one accustomed to the wild freedom and perfect independence of an Eastern wanderer's life: its very hardships have a charm, and its dangers an excitement that are all unknown in this every-day English life of ours.

You are wakened in the morning by the song of birds, which your sleeping ear, all regardless of the jackal's howl or the ocean's roar throughout the night, yet recognizes as its expected summons. You fling off the rough capote, your only covering, start from the carpet, your only couch, and, with a plunge into the river or the sea, your toilet is made at once.

The rainbow mists of morning are still heavy on the landscape while you sip your coffee; but, by the time you spring into your saddle, all is clear and bright, and you feel, as you press the sides of your eager horse, and the stirring influence of morning buoys you up, as if fatigue could never come. The breeze, full of flowery smells and songs of birds, blusters merrily round your turban, as you gallop to the summit of some hill to watch the Syrian sunrise spread in glory over Lebanon, Hermon, or Mount Carmel. Meanwhile, your tent is struck; your various luggage packed upon the horses, with a completeness and celerity that only the wandering Arab can attain to, and a heap of ashes alone remains to mark the site of your transient home.

Your cavalcade winds slowly along the beaten path, but you have many a castled crag, or woody glen, or lonely ruin to explore; and your untiring Arab courser seems ever fresh and vigorous as when he started. Occasionally you meet some traveller armed to the teeth, who inquires news of the road you have come, and perhaps relates some marvellous adventure from which he has just escaped. He bristles like a porcupine, with a whole armoury of pistols, daggers, and yataghans, but his first and parting salutation is that of "Peace!" In no country of the world is that gentle word so often used, or so little understood.

Well, then, some khan or convent, or bubbling spring, marks your resting-place during the burning noon; and you are soon again in motion, with all the exhilaration of a second morning. Your path is as varied as your thoughts; now, over slippery crags, upon some view commanding mountain's brow; now, along verdant valleys, or through some ravine where the winter torrent was the last passenger. Oleanders in rich bloom are scattered over the green turf; your horse treads odours out of a carpet of wild flowers; strange birds of brilliant plumage are darting from bough to bough of the wild myrtle and the lemon-tree; lizards are gleaming among the rocks; and the wide sea is so calm, and bright, and mirror-like, that the solitary ship upon its bosom seems suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between two skies.

All this time, too, you are travelling in the steps of prophets, conquerors, and apostles; perhaps along the very path which the Saviour trod. "What is yonder village?" "Nazareth." "What yonder lake?" "The sea of Galilee." Only he who has heard these answers from a native of Palestine can understand their thrilling sound.

But evening approaches; your horse's step is as free, but less elastic than fourteen hours ago. Some wayside khan or village presents itself for the night's encampment; but, more frequently, a fountain or a river's bank is the only inducement that decides you to hold up your hand. Suddenly, at that sign, the horses stop; down comes the luggage; and, by the time you have unbridled and watered your horse, a carpet is spread on the green turf, and a fire is already blazing. As you fling yourself on the hard couch of earth with a sensation of luxury, one of your attendants presents you with the soothing chibouque, while another hands a tiny cup of coffee, which at once restores tone to your system, and enables you to look out upon the lovely sunset with absorbing satisfaction. Meanwhile, your tent has risen silently over you;

* *Eöthen:* a work lately published without a name, containing more brilliant truth and vividness of description, deeper thought, and more delicate and subtle humour, than any book upon the East I have ever seen.

the baggage is arranged in a crescent form round the door; the horses are picketted in front. Your simple meal is soon despatched, and a quiet stroll by moonlight concludes the day. Then, wrapped in your capote, you fling yourself once more upon your carpet, place your pistols under your saddle-pillow, and are soon lost in such sleep as only the care-free traveller knows.

I had been only three hours in Acre, but the transition from its melancholy streets to the open country was delightful. I rode past St. George's mount, and forded the little river Belus, where glass was first discovered. A ship, laden with nitre, was stranded on this shore about 2,000 years ago; some of her sailors employed blocks of the fossil alkali that constituted their cargo, to support their kettle in the fire which they kindled by the river, and soon found rivulets of crystal trickling from the fusion of this substance with the flinty sand. The stream holds a quantity of silicious matter in solution, which it precipitates on exposure to the atmosphere; hence, its banks are strewn with this fine flinty powder, by means of which the Venetians attained to such perfection in this manufacture.

The pathway here wanders among shrubberies of valonidis and laurustinus, and by the banks of "that ancient river, the river Kishon." We read of its drowning many fugitives in the discomfiture of Sisera's host, and of similar performances on its part after the Turks were defeated by the French at Mount Tabor; now, it ran meekly and unostentatiously into the sea, not six yards wide, and scarcely reaching to the horses' knees.

A fine avenue of sycamores partly shades the path to Caiffa, a pretty little gaily-bazaared town, which we traversed; and, after some steep climbing, arrived at the summit of Mount Carmel, where the promontory looks out upon the sea.

The view from here is very grand, but somewhat saddening, from the loneliness and want of cultivation that everywhere meet the eye. The "excellency of Carmel" is indeed "departed;" but there is still much that is romantic and interesting in the character of the mountain. An immense expanse of ocean, unenlivened by a single sail; wide tracts of land, unchequered by a village; at the base of the mountain a few half bald corn-fields, and some olive and sycamore trees, compose the view. Beyond its beautiful bay to the North, the town and fortress of Acre stand boldly out into the sea. To the South, the extensive ruins of Castel Pelegrino and a wild mountain range bound the horizon.

After a glance from the heights, we descended to the convent, a large, unadorned building of two stories high, with a dome in the midst. I was received with great kindness by the fathers; and, having met with an accident in ascending the mountain, I stood not a little in need of their hospitality. It was an agreeable surprise, instead of the usual bare whitewashed cell, to find here a neat little sitting-room, such as one meets in Welsh inns; there was even, I think, a carpet on the floor, and certainly there were chairs and tables, rare luxuries in these parts. What struck me most, however, were some pretty hand-screens, which my host told me with pride had been painted by a "bellissima signora," during her stay at the convent. There were numerous names of lady-visitors in the father's book; and very pleasant it must be to those of the gentler sex who venture upon this rough Syrian travelling, to rest their delicate limbs even for a night on the soft couches of the Carmelites.

From the sitting-room I have described, a corridor leads to four bedrooms, neatly furnished, and extremely clean: one of these, to the great credit of the fathers, is even adapted for the reception of a married couple. In this hospitable convent I remained for five days, unable to leave my room, and most kindly attended by Fra' Jean Battista and Fra' Clementi. The latter was a meek and resigned-looking young monk, probably not more than thirty years of age, yet he had been withering in a convent for eleven of those years. The former is a very remarkable man. Jean Battista is now seventy years old, yet his eye is as full of fire, and his energy as fresh, as when he first assumed the cowl in penance for errors that were the consequence of his temperament. That very temperament, when acting upon different motives, built up this convent. There had formerly been a convent here of some consideration: and the whole mountain had been sprinkled with little hermitages, wherein the followers of Elijah sought for the sources of his inspiration in the scenes that had witnessed his presence.

These hermits died upon the mountain, and with them the solitary spirit. Those who sought shelter from the world in retirement were contented to find it in communion with fellow-sufferers, and the convent still survived. During the siege of Acre, under Napoleon, it was converted into a hospital for the wounded; after their retreat it was blown up by the Pasha, who pretended that it offered too strong a military position. Jean Battista, in making a pilgrimage to Elijah's cave, some twenty years ago, found only an altar and an archway there; but he made a vow upon the spot that he would rebuild the convent; and behold what the strong will and determined energy of one man can accomplish! He travelled over

Europe, and begged for this purpose during fourteen years, and now the stateliest convent in Palestine rewards his labours. He is, though the founder, only a lay-brother. There is a Superior, with twenty-four monks, lodged here; they dispense provisions to the poorer pilgrims gratis, and have built a hospice apart for their reception.

Each monk has some peculiar office: that of Fra' Clementi consisted in receiving and entertaining guests; Jean Battista manages the temporal affairs, and the rest are occupied in some manner only known to themselves. I scarcely ever saw these last; but, while I took my meals, Fra' Clementi used to sit with me. A coarse, brown cloth hood and cassock, a rope girdle, and sandals, constituted his dress. His voice was soft and low, particularly when he spoke of his home in Italy, which he never was to see again. He had taken the vows merely as other men enter on a profession: he had no particular reason for doing so; and, though he was only nineteen when he assumed the Carmelite's cowl, he had never regretted having done so. So he said, at least, and probably believed: although his expression of countenance was sad enough, there did not seem energy enough left in his hopeless heart for repining.

There are panthers, partridges, hyænas, and wild-boars on the mountain; the few goatherds who invade its lonely valleys are always armed, and drive their flocks into stone enclosures before nightfall. The game-keeper, or destroyer, employed by the brothers of the convent was unfortunately absent, but they assured me that wild boars abounded, and that partridge and quail were very numerous.

A more tempting spring or summer residence for any one in search of retirement could scarcely be imagined than this convent—magnificent scenery, the finest air, the calmest solitude at command; Italian spoken in perfection in the only society; and excursions within easy reach to Nazareth, Acre, Athlit, Esdraelon, Mount Tabor, and Cæsarea Philippi. The rule of the convent is to entertain a stranger for a fortnight only, but they are too happy to continue their hospitality as long as he chooses to remain, provided he will take up his quarters occasionally in the hospice, when newer guests and stronger claimants arrive.

The diet is simple, perhaps too much so, for those who have not become accustomed to Eastern habits. Meat, except pigeons, is unknown, and even in that form is very rare; soup made of vegetables; bread, eggs, coffee, and milk are the principal diet; there was also to be had a refreshing cordial, in which brandy figured advantageously, prepared by Fra' Clementi's own attenuated hands.

There are some very curious fossils found in a field near the convent, which are called petrified fruits by the inhabitants, and which bear an exact resemblance to melons and olives* in shape and colour. I believe there are other varieties in this stony garden, but these were all I saw. Fra' Clementi gave me the following account of their origin, not as a fact, I must observe, but as a legend. A churlish sort of Israelite, the Nabal of his neighbourhood, possessed a luxuriant orchard here in Elijah's time. The prophet passing by one day, and oppressed by thirst, requested this churl to give him a little fruit out of the abundance that had been bestowed upon him. "You are mistaken, old man," was the inhospitable answer; "what you see are only stones." "Many a true word is spoken in jest," said the wayfarer, or words to that effect, and passed on his journey. The gardener, on turning round, found that his own assertion was made true; and the pilgrim may now freely gather the fruit that was refused to the Prophet of Mount Carmel.

The convent is built over the cave in which Elijah is said to have taken refuge from the persecution of Ahab, and a little lower down is a larger cavern called the "Cave of the Prophets," wherein Obadiah sheltered and fed the faithful about the same time.

The day before my departure, I went out upon the mountain in search of game: I only got a shot at one hyæna, which I wounded, but he escaped from me among cliffs where my horse could not follow. I then rode into Caiffa, to order horses for my journey (Yussef having returned to Damascus), and found that every beast of burden had been pressed by the Turks, for the transport of some regiments that were marching to Beyrout. The Sultan's firman would have compelled the governor to find horses for me, but I was always indisposed to use its authority for such a purpose, as the requisition would have been made of some poor farmer, whom no money could probably repay, or he would have hired his horses freely. I therefore engaged a vessel to take me to Jaffa, a distance of about sixty miles, and the captain said he could take my own horse on board of her without difficulty. As it was an open boat, and did not draw above three feet of water, I was puzzled to know how this was to be accomplished; but as it frequently was done, and must be done, I left the arrangements to Syrian ingenuity.

The next morning, at daylight, I was awakened by Jean Battista coming to take leave of me. He was about to ride to Beyrout, a distance of one hundred miles, which

* These olives are the spines of the fossil echinus They are better known as the *lapis Judaica*, which abounds also in the Lebanon.

ne calculated on accomplishing in three days. And yet his years were seventy: such are the effects of simple diet and mountain air.

Soon afterwards two donkeys, baggaged to the ears, were to be seen picking their steps daintily down the steep path, with a very unwilling pedestrian in the shape of my servant assisting their proprietor to prevent the tottering little animals from rolling down the precipice. I presented Fra' Clementi with a somewhat larger gratuity than usual at departure, "not as repayment for the hospitality I had enjoyed, but as a grateful tribute to the convent and its charities." As these establishments are almost the only hotels in Palestine, their inmates always receive payment, and with good reason, from those who are able to afford it. While those who differ from their faith cheerfully pay these very moderate demands, the being allowed to do so prevents one feeling otherwise towards them, than to any other house of entertainment, where fire, food, and shelter are afforded for a price; but at Mount Carmel the hospitality was so genuine, and the attention of the monks so kind and cordial, that I had no feeling but that of a grateful guest as I took leave of poor Fra' Clementi and the Superior. My horse had become quite pampered during his rest, and now caracolled down the mountain's side, with a somewhat ill-timed display of activity. Poor fellow! it was the last day's health and strength he was to know.

Arrived at Caiffa, I handed him over to the captain of my transport, and went into the town about some business: when I returned, I found the poor brute laid on his side on a bed of sand in the hold of the pinnace; his fore-feet firmly bound together, and his girths lashed to the gunwale. I was struck with remorse, as he raised his speaking eyes to mine (he could not move his head), and seemed to appeal against this treatment. However, every one told me it was always thus that horses were transported; that we should run to Jaffa in six hours; and, in short, become somewhat of a fatalist, I bowed to necessity, thought of Islam, lighted my pipe, and gave orders to make sail.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### JAFFA, RAMLEH, AND THE HILL-COUNTRY OF JUDEA.

Is this thy place, Judea, this thy throne,
Where the wild desert rears its craggy stone;
While suns, unblest, their angry lustre fling,
And way-worn pilgrims seek the scanty spring?
BISHOP HEBER.

As soon as we got out to sea, the wind changed, and blew in half a gale from the southward. The boat was undecked, and the sea broke over it at every plunge. The coast was iron-bound, and inhabited by robbers and outlaws, who found shelter in its desolation. At one tack we ran close to the extensive and imposing ruins of Athlit, the Castel Pelegrino of the Crusades; at another, the lurid moon revealed the ghastly remains of Cæsarea Philippi. As we neared the shore, the jackal's cry mingled with the wild passionate sobbing of the wind and the roar of the surf, and made my poor horse prick his ears at that familiar though dismal sound. Then the night closed in gloomily, and I fell asleep with the poor brute's head upon my knees, half wakened by every plunge of the creaking boat, and the moaning and struggles of my servant and horse, who seemed to suffer equal terror and distress.

Daylight found us far from shore; the wind higher, and the waves wilder than ever. A burning sun burst out upon us, and burnt fierce headaches into our unsheltered and unturbaned brows.

We had scarcely a rag of sail set to the storm, but when the gale caught us on the ridge of a wave we were gunwale-under in a moment, and the leaking seams of the labouring boat grated ominously in our ears. The Syrian sailors showed both nerve and skill: they stood out bravely against the temptation to run before the wind and regain the port of Caiffa, and the weary day passed without variety, or any refreshment but hard eggs and muddy water.

Night came on as dark as Erebus; there was no compass on board, and we only knew of our course when the roar of surf against the rocks announced to our ears that it was time to tack.

The second morning dawned on a long, low, sandy shore, terminated by a small promontory on which stood Jaffa, looking cool, pleasant, and welcoming among its green gardens, contrasted with the surrounding desert and the foaming sea.

The harbour is a miserable little enclosure of rocks, which breaks the force of the Mediterranean waves, and just enables one to disembark. My horse was lifted out, and lay motionless on the sands, with the spray beating over him; it was an hour before he was able to stand and follow me, which he did like a dog, up the steep streets of this dreary town.

Joppa was so called, says the Abbé Geramb, from Japhet, the son of Noah, who, it seems, contracted a taste for maritime pursuits during his long cruise in the Ark. He built a seaport here, from whence Jonah took shipping, when "he fled from the presence of the Lord." "Near here," says St. Jerome, "I

saw the remains of the chain wherewith Andromeda was bound to the rock, until delivered by Perseus from the sea-monster!" Hither Hiram sent cedar of Lebanon, for the building of the Temple: here St. Peter saw the vision of things common and unclean; and here Tabitha was raised from the dead.

Jaffa, at present, is a labyrinth of khans, convents, narrow lanes, deserted ruins, and waste places, with a few dingy streets leading from one wretched quarter to another. There are no such things as stables in these parts, so I was forced to put up my horse in a vaulted passage half blocked up by the ruins of a castle, and then retired to the Franciscan convent to rest after my voyage. This convent is spacious enough to shelter 1,000 men, and at Easter, and other seasons of pilgrimage, is often quite full. It contains an immense number of courts, house-tops, galleries, terraces, and corridors, with narrow, dirty, whitewashed cells for us—pilgrims.

In the evening I went out, like all the Joppaites of ancient and modern times, to enjoy the cool breeze upon the house-top; and, looking over the flat-roofed city, saw its various surfaces all alive, and sprinkled with gaily-dressed Syrians, for here even the Christians wear the Eastern habit.

The superior of the convent sat some time with me, and pointed out the house-top said to be that of Simon, the tanner, whereon St. Peter prayed, and saw the great vision of Tolerance. This establishment, it seems, is only a hospice, not a convent strictly speaking; it is occupied only by four Spanish Franciscans, whose duty is to receive and cherish pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

The next morning, I visited our Consular agent, a civil old Arab, who told me I had better wait for a caravan, or take an escort to Jerusalem, as the road was just then very unsafe. This is an almost invariable observation in Syria, made by every one in authority to every traveller who inquires his way.

Having smoked his pipe and thanked him for his offers of service, I rode forth upon my crippled horse, whose native spirit soon flung off his weariness; stepping out as proudly as ever, he seemed endeavouring to disguise his stiffness. The town appeared much better this morning; the bazaars and markets seemed full of business, and looked very gay with Syrian silks and shining arms, and a profusion of fruit, flowers, and vegetables.

The fortifications of Jaffa are rather respectable for an Eastern town, consisting of a wide ditch, covered way, and glacis, together with bastions and battlements along the walls. It made an honourable resistance to Buonaparte, and only 3,800 troops were left to surrender as prisoners of war. They trusted to the faith of the Christians which the deluded infidels supposed was professed by those godless invaders. They were butchered to a man in cold blood upon the following day.*

The gateway was filled with Turkish soldiers, and opened on a vacant space between it and the drawbridge, presenting a very picturesque appearance. In front was a handsome marble fountain, engraved with many pious Arabic inscriptions, which recommended the traveller, as he quaffed the stream, to bless the Giver of it. An arcade of thickly-clustering vines shaded the enclosure, round which were recesses thronged with a gowned and bearded multitude, smoking and chatting gravely, and playing chess as intently as in that sublime sketch of Retzsch's, where Man is playing Satan for his soul. Groups of picturesque and dark-eyed girls displayed the most graceful attitudes as they bent to fill their water-jars, or balanced them daintily on their veiled heads.

A broad sandy path then leads from the town through rich gardens, shaded by cypresses and mimosas, and hedged with gigantic cactus, to another handsome fountain, and an open space sheltered by palms, under which several parties of travellers, with their kneeling camels and their little fires, were luxuriously resting.

After some three miles, the road opened upon the wide plain of Sharon, sprinkled with the iris, wild tulip, and every flower almost, except its rose.

The Hill-country of Judea lay before us in a faint blue ridge, the plains of Ascalon extended on the right; the high tower of Ramleh appeared in the distance, and the next evening we were to rest at Jerusalem!

My party rapidly increased—the travellers in advance waited—those in the rear hurried after us,—for there had been several robberies lately on this road, and they found three well-mounted men no inconsiderable addition to their caravan.

My own poor steed was led by the guide, whose two baggage-horses followed his own freely, however fast he rode; and I was mounted on a Jaffa hack of indifferent appearance, but indomitable energy. I tried him well in chasing some gazelles, that had descended from "Judah's hills" to feed upon the tender corn; and I had a run of many miles after a jackal who got to ground just as he appeared to be dead-beat.

The vast plains that lie between the mountains and the sea are very partially cultivated, but luxuriant patches of corn, and the rich

* *Miot* (Expeditions en Egypt et en Syria) and *Denon* confirm Sir Robert Wilson's fearful story of this massacre.

grass that grew wild, proved how readily it could bring forth abundance; and that it was the inhabitants and not the soil that lay under the Curse. Once, twenty millions of people, it is said, dwelt in plenty and prosperity, where now some 1,800,000 find a scanty sustenance. The more I see of Turkish rule, the more admirably does that rule appear adapted to accomplish a denouncing prophecy.

Towards sunset, we reached Ramleh, and beat loud and long for admittance into the Franciscan convent outside the walls. This is a similar establishment to that I had just left at Jaffa, equally spacious, and only garrisoned by three Spanish monks. In the various cool cloisters and high-walled courts, shaded by the lemon, the orange and the palm-tree, the air was delightfully refreshing, for it was now near midsummer, and we had swept the plain of Sharon at a gallop that soon distanced our temporary caravan.

When I came down to dinner in a place like a cellar, only there was no wine in it, the fat superior told me that I had fallen upon a fast-day, but bade me welcome to such fare as the refectory afforded. This consisted of a mass of smashed eggs, by way of an omelette, some cucumbers, and a dish of rice stewed in grease. The banquet was spread on a filthy table, without a cloth. There was good bread, however, with which, together with my own tea, I contrived to practise abstinence, even towards Lenten diet.

One of these Franciscan monks appeared to belong to a higher order of birth and intellect than any I had yet met with. He accompanied me to the house-top, where my pipe and coffee were served, and inquired anxiously about the state of Spain, and the war in the Basque provinces, which I told him I had witnessed. He became quite enthusiastic in his nationality when I spoke of the oak-tree of Guernica, and the Fueros of his native country, the Basque provinces; but, when I asked him whether he was Carlist or Christino, he checked himself suddenly, and said with humility, "Signor, son' frate!"

Soon afterwards, he left me to myself, and keenly did I enjoy that first evening of my Judean travel. It appeared almost incredible to me that in a few short hours I should stand within the walls of Jerusalem; yet there lay the path to it, opening among the hills of Judah, as they rose in beauty from Sharon's varied plains.

The setting sun threw a rich glow upon the deep groves in which the picturesque town lay buried; the air was the balmiest I ever breathed; myriads of birds were singing enthusiastically in the palms and olive-branches; the laughter of the village children sounded merrily from their playground; the lowing of cattle, the hum of insects—all was in perfect harmony and keeping. And then the strange, unusual appearance of the town, over whose roofs I looked, Asmodeus-like, from the lofty convent terrace! All the female inhabitants were pursuing their various occupations in the open air, in the courtyards, or on the roofs of their houses. These houses were all pimpled with little domes rising out of their flat roofs, and covered like them with grey stucco, which, with the minarets, gave a very peculiar effect to the downward view. About half a mile from the town are the magnificent ruins of an ancient khan or mosque, or both; with a lofty tower, that serves as a landmark for many miles around.

It was very amusing to watch the town taking its evening meal, "al fresco," each party invisible to its neighbour owing to partition walls, but open to my inspection as I stood on the convent watch-tower. Then the women began to array themselves for the night, with the same unconsciousness of a stranger's presence. Start not, gentle reader, for there was no *dis*-arraying; the Ramlehan maidens merely put on a loose white garment over their day-dress, and lie down to rest under the serene sky.

My sleeping cell was less squalid than in the Jaffa convent, but still was such as no English felon would be obliged to occupy. There were musquitoes, too, as thick as gnats under a summer bough; and it was without any interruption of slumber that I rose soon after midnight to start for Jerusalem. How soft and beautiful was that night, as its breezes whispered among the orange and the palm-trees in the cloistered courts, and the moon shone tenderly over forlorn Palestine and that far-off silvery sea, that led the thoughts insensibly away, even from Jerusalem, to Europe and to home!

Fra' Gonzaga, the Biscayan monk, got up to see me start, and, in reply to my complaints of the musquitoes, observed, as if he was proud of them, "Non sono moltissimi?" He then glanced complacently at my breakfast-table, which was served with eatables that Ugolino would have shrunk from; and wished me "un buon' appetito" with a grim smile that had no relation whatever to a joke.

Ramleh, the ancient Arimathea, was the seat of government in the Theocratic days of Israel: here Samuel judged the people, and here the elders of the Hebrews assembled to demand a king to rule over them. It is now a mean, straggling town, without fortification, but surrounded with gardens and olive-groves, that cheerfullize it. We passed through a cemetery in the twilight, and saw flocks of

goats and sheep *following* their shepherds to the pasture, from which they are driven into the town every evening. Many travellers were already on the road, collecting together for the purpose of security, and all furnished with some kind of arms, from the long musket to the candjiar in their girdle.

Our way lay among wide plains, very scantily cultivated, and without a vestige of habitation; the path was wide, and, though sandy, not deep enough to be laborious to the horses. After two hours' travel, we came to the ruins of Ekron, which are very extensive, and importantly connected with crusading history.

This fortress commanded the pass into the Hill-country, and after we left it behind us the road entered a defile of rocky mountains; numerous shrubs, the laurustinus, the privet, and the bay-tree, were thickly scattered over the steep acclivities. Wilder and wilder grew the scenery at each winding of the road, toppling precipices closed round us, and our little party gathered closer together as they unslung their muskets; the van looking more like a storming party than a company of peaceful travellers. There is some instinctive love of danger in every breast, particularly in that of the Arab, whose blood, however tranquilly it may generally flow, never loses an opportunity of exhibiting its desert origin.

Fortunately for our amusement, a party had been robbed and illtreated two days before in these defiles, and the preparations for action that we made were of a most imposing character. A fat old tobacconist and a lean barber rode on heroically, as an advanced guard; a couple of tinkers and a Turkish soldier brought up the rear; three or four camels, half a dozen horsemen, with a couple of donkeys carrying panniers of children, formed the main body, in which my anxious servant deeply ensconced himself, while a young Swiss, three or four Turkish cavalry soldiers, and myself, gave our horses to be ridden by some of the tired pedestrians, and ranged the cliffs as skirmishers, in actual hope of a gazelle, or partridge, and professed fear of an Arnaout, or some native robber.

I soon got tired of this playing at soldiers and sportsman, and summoning my unwilling servants, I spurred forward as fast as almost inaccessible rocky paths would permit. I felt the utmost impatience to reach Jerusalem; and, moreover, a burning sun had been shining on us for many hours, and a well was before us. At length we reached it;

> "But vain was the hope that had lured us on—
> Our trust in the desert—the waters were gone."

Some damp mud alone remained, which the muleteer and his horses rather chewed than drank.

We proceeded for some distance more slowly as the road grew more picturesque and impracticable, and met some well-armed attendants, evidently bespeaking the approach of a person of consideration. The pass was, however, too difficult to make inquiries, as we squeezed by the strangers; and shortly afterwards, on rounding a steep and difficult projection, I encountered the light and graceful figure of a lady, beautifully mounted, and apparently quite at home in that savage wilderness. The ease with which she sate her fiery horse in his difficult path, not less than her costume, told me that I saw a countrywoman; and, soon after, an English voice, though it was in Italian that she spoke, announced her nation. She bowed slightly, in return to my salute, as did the gentleman accompanying her, whose costume would have appeared to advantage in Hyde Park; while mine, soiled and travel-stained, and half oriental as it was, left it a matter of doubt to what country I belonged. So I passed in silence those to whom I was afterwards indebted for the most agreeable day I passed in Judea, and to whose acquaintance I still look back with lively pleasure.

Earlier in the year, it is one of the pleasant incidents of travel to meet with other pilgrims, amongst whom one generally finds or makes agreeable acquaintances; but the heat of the weather, and the advanced season of my pilgrimage, had divested the country of Europeans, and these were the only English travellers I encountered during the whole of my Syrian tour.

Henceforth, our path necessitated one perpetual climb, scramble, or slide: slippery rocks, yawning into deep fissures, or so round and smooth as to render firm footing impossible, constituted the only road. Yet this has been, for four thousand years, the highway between Jerusalem and the western plains that border on the sea. Chariots never could have been used here; and it would be impossible for cavalry to act, or even to advance against a hostile force.

The scenery resembled that of the wildest glens of Scotland, only that here the grey crags were thickly tufted with aromatic shrubs, and instead of the pine, the sycamore, the olive, and the palm, shaded the mountain's side.

We passed by the village of Jeremiah, and "the Terebinthine Vale." In the last we recognize the scene of David's combat with Goliah, and its little brook still sparkles here as freshly as when he picked pebbles thence to smite the Philistine. Generally speaking, the river beds were as dry as the path we trod, and this was the only stream but one

that I saw between Jaffa and the Jordan. A large caravan was assembled on its banks, with all its picturesque variety of laden camels, mules with gay trappings, mountain cavaliers with turban and embroidered vest, veiled women on donkeys, half-naked Arabs with long spears, dwellers in cities with dark kaftan, or furred pelisse. All, however various their nation, profession, or appearance, were eagerly quaffing the precious stream, or waiting under "the shadow of a high rock" for the caravan to proceed.

The hills became more and more precipitous as we approached Jerusalem; most of them were of a conical form, and terraced to their summit. Yet on these steep acclivities the strenuous labour of the Israelite had formerly grown corn, and wine, and oil; and, on the terraces that remained uninjured, the few present inhabitants still plant wheat, and vineyards, and olive groves. There was no appearance of water, except the inference that might be drawn of wells within the few villages that hung upon the mountain's side.

The pathway continued as rough as ever, while we wound through the rocky defiles leading to the upper plains; but it was much more frequented, and I had joined a large and various company, for the sake of listening to their talk about the city that now absorbed every other interest. At each acclivity we surmounted, we were told that the next would reveal to us the object of our destination; and at length, as we emerged upon a wide and sterile plain, the leading pilgrims sank upon their knees, and the most contagious shout of enthusiasm that I ever heard burst from each traveller; every man of that large company, Arab, Italian, Greek, and Englishman exclaiming, each in his own tongue: "El Khuds!" "Gerusalemma!" "Hagiopolis!" "The Holy City!"

## CHAPTER XLII.

### JERUSALEM.

Of earth's dark circlet once the precious gem
Of living light—O fallen Jerusalem!

SOUTHEY.

Ecco! appairir Gerusalem si vede!
Ecco! da molti voci unitamente
Gerusalemma salutar si sente.

TASSO.

It was indeed Jerusalem—and, had the Holy City risen before us in its palmiest days of magnificence and glory, it could not have created deeper emotion, or been gazed at more earnestly, and with intenser interest.

So long the object of eager hope and busy imagination, it stood before me at length in actual reality—the city of David, the chosen seat of God, the deathplace of his Son, the object of the world's pilgrimage for two thousand years! Its history, so strangely blended with holiness and crime, with prosperity and desolation, with triumph and despair; a thousand associations came thronging into recollection, and peopled its towers and surrounding plains with all the scenes and actors of bygone eventful years. These feelings I shared in common with the humblest pilgrim that was kneeling there, and, in some respects, he had even the advantage of me; he had made infinitely greater sacrifices than I had done, and undergone far heavier toils to reach that bourne. Undistracted by mere temporal associations, *he* only saw the sacred spot wherein the Prophets preached, and David sung, and Christ had died.

The whole cavalcade paused simultaneously when Jerusalem appeared in view; the greater number fell upon their knees and laid their foreheads in the dust, whilst a profound silence, more impressive than the loudest exclamations, prevailed over all. Even the Moslem guides and servants, folding their arms on their bosoms, gazed reverently on what was to them also a holy city, and recalled to mind the pathetic appeal of their forefather Esau—"Hast thou not a blessing for me, also, O my Father?"

When the crusading army, thinned by pestilence, privation, and many a battle-field, gazed upon the view before us, that warrior-host knelt down as a single man; sobs burst from their mailed bosoms, and tears streamed down their rugged cheeks. Those tears, and not the blood so profusely shed upon the plains of Palestine, were the true evidences of the Crusading spirit.

Apart from all associations, the first view of Jerusalem is a most striking one. A brilliant and unchequered sunshine has something mournful in it, when all that it shines upon is utterly desolate and drear. Not a tree or green spot is visible; no sign of life breaks the solemn silence; no smile of nature's gladness ever varies the stern scenery around. The flaming, monotonous sunshine above, and the pale, distorted, rocky wastes beneath, realize but too faithfully the prophetic picture—"Thy sky shall be brass, and thy land shall be iron."

To the right and left, as far as the eye can reach, vague undulations of colourless rocks extend to the horizon. A broken and desolate plain in front is bounded by a wavy, battlemented wall, over which towers frown, and minarets peer, and mosque-domes swell; intermingled with church-turret and an indistinguishable mass of terraced roofs. High over the city, to the left, rises the Mount of Olives; and the distant hills of Moab, almost

mingling with the sky, afford a background to the striking picture.

There was something startlingly new and strange in that wild, shadowless landscape; the clear outlines of the hills, and the city walls, so colourless, yet so well defined against the naked sky, gave to the whole a most unreal appearance; it resembled rather an immense engraving, than anything which nature and nature's complexion had to do with.

I am not sure that this stern scenery did not present the only appearance that would not have disappointed expectation. It was unlike anything else on earth—so blank to the eye, yet so full of meaning to the heart; every mountain round is familiar to the memory; even yon blasted fig-tree has its voice, and the desolation that surrounds us bears its silent testimony to its fearful experiences. The plain upon which we stand looks like the arena of mighty struggles in times gone by—struggles in which all the mighty nations of the earth took part, and in which Nature herself seems to have shared.

Each of our party had waited for the other to finish his devotions, and seemed to respect each pilgrim's feelings with a Christian courtesy, perhaps inspired by the spot. At length, all had risen from their genuflexions and prostrations, and we moved slowly forward over the rugged yet slippery path which human feet had worn in the solid rock. Countless had been the makers of that path —Jebusites, Hebrews, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Egyptians, Romans, Saracens, Crusaders, and pilgrims from every country under heaven.

As we advanced, some olive-trees appeared, and deep valleys on the left, slightly marked with pale, green gardens. An enclosure concealed the prospect for a while, and then again the City of Zion appeared, shadowing with its battlemented walls the barren rocks around. As we approached, nothing but these walls were visible, with their massive gates and lofty towers; presenting, probably, the same appearance as they wore to the Crusader's view. Here and there a turbaned head was visible, and the Crescent banner was waving from the citadel; a few tents, green, white, and blue, were scattered round, as if forsaken in a hurry; and all else looked as if it had been laid waste in order to afford no shelter to an enemy.

I had always pictured Jerusalem as standing upon lofty hills, and visible from afar. It is, on the contrary, on the edge of the wide platform by which we approach from Jaffa, and is commanded by the Mount of Olives, the Hill of Scopas, and other eminences, from which it is divided by the deep and narrow ravines called the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the Vale of Hinnom. These ravines meet in the form of a Y, the lower part of which describes the precipitous glen through which the brook Kedron flows in winter to the Dead Sea.

The site of the city is in itself unique; selected originally from the strength of its position only, it offers none of the features usually to be found surrounding the metropolis of a powerful people. No river nor any stream flows by; no fertility surrounds it, no commerce seems able to approach its walls, no thoroughfare of nations finds it in the way. It seems to stand apart from the world, exempt from its passions, its ambitions, and even its prosperity. Like the high priest who once ministered in its temple, it stands solitary and apart from all secular influences, and only receives those who come to worship at its mysteries. All the other cities of the earth are frequented by votaries of gain, or science, or luxury, or glory. Zion only offers privations to the pilgrim's body, solemn reflection for his thoughts, awe for his soul. Her palaces are ruins, her hotels are dreary convents, her chief boast and triumph is a Tomb.

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After some resistance from the Turkish sentinels, I entered the Pilgrims' Gate under a lofty archway, and found myself in Jerusalem!

On the left within the walls is a waste place strewed with ruins, and containing a broken cistern, called the "Pool of Bathsheba;" on the right is pointed out the Hill of Zion, whereon "David's Tower" maintains its ground in tradition, if not in truth. From this open space three streets, or rather roads (for they are almost houseless), branch off; that to the left leads to Calvary, and the convent of the Terra Santa; that to the right to Mount Zion, the English Church, and Armenian convent; and that straight onward to Mount Moriah, where stands the Mosque of Omar, and the collection of villages that is called the city.

I betook myself to the hospice of the Latin convent, where I found a whitewashed cell and an iron bedstead at my disposal. It was dismal enough; but long travel under a Syrian sun prevents one from feeling fastidious, and it ill becomes a pilgrim to complain on Calvary.

The convent, whose guest I now found myself, is the wealthiest and most influential of all those in Palestine. It is called by distinction *the* Convent of the Terra Santa, and has possessions handed down from the times of Godfrey de Bouillon; all the other Latin convents in Syria pay deference to this, the chief guardian of the Holy Sepulchre.

I took no guide but memory; and, mounting a fresh horse, I repassed the gate by

which I had entered on the Southern side, and rode forth to make a circuit of the city, "to walk round about her, and mark well her battlements." Sadly has all been changed since this proud challenge was spoken, yet the walls are still towering and imposing in their effect. They vary in height from twenty to sixty feet, according to the undulations of the ground; and are everywhere in good repair. The columns and architraves, as old at least as the Roman-conquered city, that are worked into these walls instead of ruder stones, bear eloquent testimony to the different nature of their predecessors. Here and there, their nakedness is reverently clothed with ruin-loving weeds, but their general appearance is practical and modern. A bridle-path leads close to their base all round; the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat yawn suddenly beneath them on the west, south, and north, separating them from Mount Gihon, the Hill of Evil Counsel, and the Mount of Olives. These hills are utterly barren, and as lonely as fear can make them. Though within gunshot of the city, robberies are here committed with impunity, and few people venture to leave Jerusalem without being well armed and attended. The deep gloom of the Valley of Hinnom; the sterility of all around; the silence and desolation so intense, yet so close to the populous city; the sort of memory with which I could trace each almost familiar spot, from the Tower of Hippicus to the Hill of Scopas, made this the most interesting excursion I ever undertook.

And now we look down upon the Pool and Valley of Gihon from the summit of Mount Zion; now upon the Vale of Hinnom, with the Pool of Siloam, and Aceldama beyond the brook; now over Mount Moriah, with the Valley of Jehoshaphat beneath, and the village of Siloam on the opposite side, scattered along the banks where Kedron used to flow. Then, passing through the Turkish cemetery and over the brook Kedron, we come to the venerable garden of Gethsemane, in which, say the legends, still stand the olive-trees that sheltered Christ. This garden is only a small grove, occupying perhaps two acres of ground, but it is one of the best authenticated scenes of interest about Jerusalem. From it, a steep and rocky path leads to the three summits of the Mount of Olives, on the loftiest of which stands the Church of the Ascension. An Armenian priest admitted me into the sacred enclosure, motioned to a little monk to lead about my horse, and led the way in silence to the roof of the church.

From hence is the most interesting, if not the most striking, view in the world.

From such a summit might the great leader of the people have viewed the land, which was to be the reward of their desert wanderings. From it is laid bare every fibre of the great heart of Palestine.

The atmosphere is like a crystal lens, and every object in the Holy City is as clear as if it lay within a few yards, instead of a mile's distance. Each battlement upon those war-worn walls, each wild flower that clusters over them; the dogs prowling about the waste places among the ruins, and cactus, and cypress; the turbaned citizens slowly moving in the streets; all these were recognizable almost as clearly as the prominent features of the city.

The eminence called Mount Moriah lies nearest to our view, just above the narrow valley of Jehoshaphat. The city wall passes over the centre of it, embracing a wide enclosure, studded with cypresses and cedars, in the centre of which stands the magnificent Mosque of Omar. This is of a very light, fantastic architecture, scarcely seeming able to support the massive dome. It bristles with points, and little spires, and minarets, many of which have gilded crescents that flash and gleam in the sunshine; while the various groups of Moslems, sitting on bright carpets, or slowly wandering among the groves, give life and animation to the scene. This mosque occupies the site of the temple, and is held holy by the Moslem as the spot where Abraham offered Isaac to be a sacrifice. To the left of the mosque enclosure within the walls is a space covered with rubbish and jungles of the prickly pear; then part of the Hill of Zion, and David's Tower. To the right of the enclosure is the Pool of Bethesda, beyond which St. Stephen's Gate affords entrance to the Via Dolorosa, a steep and winding street, along which Christ bore the Cross in his ascent to Calvary. To the right of this street, and towards the north, stands the hill of Acra, on which Salem, the most ancient part of the city, was built, they say, by Melchisedek. This hill is enclosed by the walls of the modern town; but the hill of Bezetha lies yet further to the right, and was enclosed within the walls that the Romans stormed. Beyond Bezetha stands the Hill of Scopas, wherefrom Titus gazed upon Jerusalem the day before its destruction, and wept for the sake of the beautiful city.

"And Ruin's merciless ploughshare must pass over,
And barren salt be sown on yon proud city!
As on our olive-crowned hill we stand,
Where Kedron at our feet its gentle waters
Distils from stone to stone with gentle motion,
As though a valley sacred to sweet Peace.
How boldly doth it front us! how majestically!
Like a luxurious vineyard, the hill-side
Is hung with marble fabrics, line on line,
Terrace o'er terrace, nearer still and nearer

To the blue heavens. Here bright and sumptuous palaces,
With cool and verdant gardens interspersed;
Here towers of war, that frown in massive strength,
While over all hangs the rich purple eve,
As conscious of its being her last farewell
Of light and glory to that fated city.
And as our clouds of battle, dust, and smoke,
Are melted into air, behold the Temple,
In undisturbed and lone serenity,
Finding itself a solemn sanctuary
In the profound of heaven." *

But from the Hill on which *we* stand, One other also wept over that fated city. No conquering armies lay around it then; luxury and plenty revelled among its marble palaces; there was large hope on earth, and a new hope just dawned that lighted up the dark passage of the grave, and showed through its narrow vista a glorified image of that city so dear to its inhabitants—a new Jerusalem. In vain that hope! The stubborn Jew had, in bygone years, impatiently rejected God as his king, and demanded a being like himself "to reign over him;" he now refused to listen to Him, albeit of the house of David, who, by his own confession, "spake as never man spake;" and, with the same sordid spirit that has ever characterized his nation, boasted that he had no king but Cæsar. Then, indeed, "did the sceptre depart from Israel." Foreign banners might wave upon her towers, foreign tyrants might grind her with oppression; but a nation never can know slavery, until its *spirit* is bowed voluntarily beneath the yoke.

Whatever beauty may have distinguished the city in the day of its evil pride, there is little within the wide enclosure of its walls to claim an interest, except the unchangeable hills on which it stands. Here and there is a cluster of flat-roofed buildings, then a space bewildered with weeds and ruins; here is a busy street, with vines sheltering its bazaars, and gorgeous-looking crowds streaming through it; and there is a deserted garden, with a few dreary olive-trees or cypresses shading its burnt soil; here is a mosque, with its heavy dome and its pert minarets; and there is the capacious church that covers the Holy Sepulchre.

The eye wanders away with a feeling of relief from this most mournful city, to the wide, strange prospect that surrounds it. Far to the south, we look over the barren but magnificent hills of Judah with vistas through their rocky glens; of the rich valley of the Jordan, and the calm, green waters of the Dead Sea; whose surface gleams on either side of a foreground formed by the lofty village of Bethany. Beyond Jordan and the Dead Sea, the mountains of the Moabites tower into the clear blue sky, and are reflected in brown and purple shadows on their own dark, mysterious Sea.

Beneath us is the garden of Gethsemane, the Valley of Hinnom with its Tophet, and the Vale of Jehoshaphat with its brook Kedron, which meets the waters of Siloam at the Well of Job. The Tombs of the Kings, of Nehemiah, of Absalom, and of the Judges, lie before us; the caves of the Prophets everywhere pierce the rocks, that have so often resounded to the war-cry of the Chaldean, the Roman, the Saracen, and the Crusader. Beyond the city spreads the Vale of Rephaim, with Bethlehem in the distance; and every rock, and hill, and valley that is visible bears some name that has rung in history.

And then the utter desolation that everywhere prevails—as if all was over with that land, and the "rocks had indeed fallen, and the hills indeed had covered" the mighty, the beautiful, and the brave, who once dwelt there in prosperity and peace.

No flocks, no husbandmen, nor any living thing is there, except a group of timid travellers; turbaned figures, and veiled women, and a file of camels, who, winding along the precipitous pathway under the shade of the fig and palm-trees, complete the picture.

Descending from the Mount of Olives, I re-entered the city by St. Stephen's Gate, which is guarded by Turkish soldiers; turning to the left, I visited the Pool of Bethesda, which still contains water, and then wandered slowly over the Via Dolorosa, in which is pointed out each spot where the Saviour fell under the burden of the Cross, as he bore it to Calvary along this steep and rugged way.

In after days, I impatiently traversed the squalid city, with a monk for my guide, in search of its various localities of traditionary sanctity; but I will not ask the reader to stoop to such a labour. My monkish cicerone pointed out to me where Dives lived, where Lazarus lay, where the cock crowed or roosted that warned Peter of his crime, and even where the blessed Virgin used to wash her son's linen. It is difficult to speak of such things gravely; and yet I would not have one light feeling or expression intermingled with the solemn subjects of which this chapter attempts to treat. When we visit Marathon or Salamis, it would shame us to be insensible of their heroic associations; and the pilgrim who can scoff within the walls of Jerusalem does himself at least as little credit in the choice of sensations that he may give way to.

The character of the city within corresponds with that of the country without. Most of it is very solitary and silent; echo only answers to your horse's tread; and frequent waste places, among which the wild dog prowls,

* Milman's "Fall of Jerusalem."

convey an indescribable impression of desolation.

It is not these waste places alone that give such an air of loneliness to the city, but many of the streets themselves, dark, dull, and mournful-looking, seem as if the Templars' armed tread were the last to which they had resounded. The bazaars and places of business are confined to one small quarter of the city; everywhere else, you generally find yourself alone. No one is even there to point out your way; and you come unexpectedly upon the Pool of Bethesda, or wander among the vaulted ruins of the Hospitallers' courts, without knowing it. The remains of the ancient city that meet your eye are singularly few; here and there a column is let into the wall, or you find that the massive and uneven pavement is of costly marble; but, except the Pools of Hezekiah and Bethesda, the Tower of Hippicus, and some few other remains, preserved on account of their utility, there is little of art to connect the memory with the past.

At the base of the wall that forms the enclosure of the Mosque of Omar are some immense blocks of marble stone, that are said to have formed part of the ancient Temple. I had long sought in vain for Jews among the streets, but here I found them appropriately kneeling at what is called the Place of Wailing. Each Friday, numbers of these people assemble here, and beat their bosoms, and weep and wail, for Zion's vanished glory.

The chief place of interest in Jerusalem is the Holy Sepulchre, whose site I believe to be as real, as the panorama that the priests have gathered round it is false. You descend by a narrow lane and a flight of steps, into a small enclosure, where you find a guard of Turkish soldiers stationed to keep peace among the Christians. The edifice itself is about the size of Christ's Cathedral, in Dublin, which it much resembles. After paying tribute to the Turkish soldiers, you enter into a large circular hall, supported by a colonnade of eighteen pillars, and surrounded by a large dome, in the centre of which is a pavilion containing the Holy Sepulchre.

The whole of this church has been so frequently described, that I shall only mention that within its walls are collected a panorama of all the events that took place at the crucifixion; the place where Christ was scourged; the hole in the rock where the Cross stood; the rent in the same; the place where the soldiers cast lots for the garments; the rock whereon the body was anointed; and, lastly, the grave in which He was laid.

The principal superstition by which this sepulchre is defiled is the Holy Fire, which is supposed by the Greeks and the Armenians to descend from Heaven on Easter Eve, into this little chapel. Crowds of these believers assemble towards evening, each with his torch, which he will risk his life to light, and after some masses and processions, the Greek patriarch and the Armenian bishop enter the little chapel. Shortly afterwards, a light is seen; the whole mass of worshippers precipitates itself upon a flame issuing from the pavilion; and happy is he who first lights his torch, from thenceforth sacred. The Latins affect to laugh at this imposture; but they can, unfortunately, ill afford to ridicule the superstitions of others.

The scene, as beheld from the gallery that surrounds the circular hall, is thus described by Mr. Wild:—

"The view from the gallery of this building is most exciting, and looking down upon the moving mass of human beings beneath, I was forcibly reminded of the scene that the Court of Solomon's Temple must have presented when the different tribes and nations came up to worship at Jerusalem. I scarcely knew on what object to rest my eye, so strange and varied was the appearance and costume of the crowd assembled beneath. The diversity of language; the flaunting of the silken banners that moved slowly to and fro from the top of the sepulchral chapel; the gaudy paintings of the Greeks; the waving of censers, and the perfume of incense; the crowds of pilgrims, in attitudes of deep emotion, round each sacred spot; the turbaned Greek, the high-capped Persian, the shaggy coat of the Muscovite, the long beard and dark downcast visage of the despised Copt, the dresses of the different ecclesiastics, the mitred abbot, the venerable patriarch, and the cord-girt friar will never fade from my memory.

"Then the organ of the Latins was in full play, and the measured chant of their hymns rose from the vaults beneath, and with the loud songs of the Greeks, the drums and timbrels of the Armenians, the low plaintive murmuring of the Copts, the groans of the devout pilgrims descending from Calvary, the glimmering of lamps and tapers, the long lines of the different processions—all formed a scene that beggars description.

"If I closed my eyes amidst this scene it was but to picture in my mind the bleeding sacrifice, the weeping mother, the gaunt forms of the Roman soldiery, the wagging heads of the reviling Jews, and the riven rocks, the opening sepulchres, the rent veil of the Temple, and mid-day darkness—all appeared to my imagination."

According to monkish topography, Calvary was only a few yards from the sepulchre, which itself is so altered and adorned as entirely to destroy every appearance of reality.

Neither from research or personal observation, have I any right to offer an opinion on the subject; but I incline to believe that this *is* the Sepulchre; and I see no reason to doubt that Calvary (never mentioned as a *hill* in the sacred writings) occupied the neighbouring locality. Although *within* the present enclosure of the city-walls, it was *outside* the ancient circuit, which is necessary to its identity; and there seems little probability that tradition would ever have permitted such a site to be forgotten. The actual spot occupied by the Cross appears entirely devoid of proof; but it seems evident that the place assigned to it, within a dozen yards of the Sepulchre, is the least likely of all.*

It appears that Golgotha was called "the place of a skull," because Adam's was found there, "who desired," they say, "to be buried where he knew, prophetically, that the Redeemer's blood should fall upon his grave." †

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE MONK AND THE MISSIONARY.

"On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old Monks," *Laborare est Orare.* In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work is Worship.

*Past and Present.*—CARLYLE.

We distinguish, my good father, betwixt those who only eat the bread of their own labour, and those who eat the bread of other people; and who have no other plan in life, but to get through it in sloth and ignorance, *for the love of God.*

STERNE.

Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease, he goes forth with the blessed Gospel into pagan climes, to bear the light of eternal life to those that lie in darkness and the shadow of death.

R. M'GHEE.

IT was perhaps a natural sentiment that drove enthusiasts in the earlier and stormier ages of the church to seek in retirement "that Peace which the world could not give." They might also have remembered that there was a Peace which the world could not take away. In the first burst of a new enthusiasm, however, no second thought was admitted: men of devout faith and exemplary piety had retired to the desert for the purpose of a closer communion with their God; they had announced to an anxious and fearful world that, like the typical wanderers of Israel, they had found a path through the desert to the heavenly Canaan; that they felt their salvation was assured by dint of living among reptiles and wild beasts, and assimilating the human life to theirs. Away then to the desert rushed multitudes, zealous for their souls' prosperity—there, the stormy heart was to find peace, the broken spirit consolation, despair itself to be transmuted into hope.

The man who first discovers treasure in a secret place may become enriched thereby, but they who follow will probably find only rubbish. The lofty minds of an Anthony and Pachomius had grown not only to strength, but to power, in the hermit's cell, and thousands hastened to seek for piety in the wilderness, as if it were some curious natural production that grew there only. The very desert ceased to be desert; the solitudes of Egypt and Syria became peopled with gloomy dreamers, who seemed to think it was on the body, not the soul, that the weight of sin lay so heavily. These selfish zealots had no regard to their Maker's scheme of creation, by which man is rendered necessary to man —for defence, emulation, counsel, and consolation. They found, no doubt, a fierce luxury in the lash and the privations to which they subjected themselves, and devils must have smiled when they saw the body that God had made so strong, and fair, and comely, torn and disfigured by the penance and scourge: the soul that had been given for the exercise of genial thought, and love, and friendship, shrouded by perpetual gloom, and for ever harping, as the ailing body does, upon its own sordid self. Yet these men called themselves *Catholic!*

In the mountains of Egypt, and the cliffs of the Judean hills, I have seen the burrows of these Timons speckling the precipice; the falcon and the fox that now resume their usual haunts therein have as much claim upon human sympathy as the self-outlaws of humanity who preceded them.

There were some victims of this literal

* "When you have seen enough of the Sepulchre, you feel, perhaps, weary of the busy crowd, and inclined for a gallop. You ask your dragoman whether there will be time before sunset, to procure horses, and take a ride to Mount Calvary. 'Mount Calvary, signor? Eccolo! it is *upstairs*, on the *first floor*.' You ascend thirteen steps, and there you find it."—EOTHEN.

† I visited every possible scene of Church history, with a desire to believe in its genuineness, and it was with little inclination I afterwards perused the difficulties or denials attached to each by the precise Robinson, the inaccurate Clarke, the superficial yet plausible Buckingham, the learned Richardson, Madox, Hogg, and though last, not least, the painstaking but imaginative Wild. Chateaubriand and Lamartine overlay the subject with sentiment, as the monks cover the sacred rock with silver filagree, and their style would be more applicable to Mecca or to Athens, than to Jerusalem. The Abbè de Geramb is very entertaining and interesting, too, as showing how a monk professes to feel, who, although a faithful fanatic, has not forgotten that he was a gentleman and a soldier once. Poujoulat's "Histoire de Jerusalem" is very valuable, but diffuse.

monomania, like some of the knights in the darker ages of chivalry, who displayed a spirit, philanthropy, and understanding, singularly at issue with their narrow profession. Men travelled into the desert to seek for dispassionate advice in secular affairs from such hermits, and to stimulate their faith in spiritual matters by a glimpse at such wild zeal. St. Anthony is generally considered the Chief of the Solitaries. He lived for twenty years in a ruined castle on the banks of the Nile, and was the friend of Athanasius, who made use of his testimony against the Arians, as if it were the voice of Heaven that spoke through him.

The sayings that dropped from the pale lips of these Epicureans in mortification were eagerly picked up, like crumbs, by the servile crowd that gaped around them, whenever they exhibited themselves in public. One of the monks of Egypt, being condoled with on the death of his father, sternly reproved his sympathizing friend, who thought, perhaps, that the tears which a Christ had shed would not misbecome a bereaved son. "Blaspheme not," said the monk, "*my* father is immortal." Another, having a Bible, his sole possession, sold it, and gave the price to the poor — thus, for the sake of an isolated text, sacrificing the means of instruction, and of consolation throughout a life.

I mention these two instances, because, being quoted with great pomp by ecclesiastical writers, and having survived some 1,400 years, they may be taken fairly as illustrative of the sort of monkish excellence for which civilization was foregone, and humanity exchanged.

Others, however, have left some sayings which deserve more respect, however exaggerative. Pambos for instance, not being able to read, employed a person to teach him the Psalms, and, unfortunately for his progress, began with the 39th. Having learned "I will take heed unto my ways that I offend not with my tongue," he said, "that's enough; I shall return again when I have learnt so much practically." It was nineteen years before he went back for another lesson. When at Alexandria, he saw a dancing girl exhibiting her performances, and wept at the spectacle. A bystander, remarking on the simplicity of the effect produced by the actress, inquired the cause of his tears. "I weep for two reasons," said the solitary; "first, on considering the end of that woman, and secondly, that I use not such dilligence to please God as she doth to please men."

According to the Oriental Christians, the Sethites, or "Sons of God," set the first example of the monastic life by retiring to Mount Hermon, in the hope of regaining their lately lost Paradise by the sanctity and purity of their lives: despairing at last of this, and weary of celibacy, they descended to the plains, and, intermarrying with "the daughters of men" — their kinswomen, through Cain—begot the Giants.*

Hilarion was the founder of the Christian monastic state in Syria, and St. Basil in Pontus. The spirit spread rapidly throughout the East with various modifications, and seems to have arrived at its climax in the person of Simeon Stylites, who raised himself (on a pillar) to the highest consideration in the monastic world, and was visited on his pious perch by emperors.

At this period, every conspicuous spot in Syria swarmed with human wearers of horses' hair, and feeders on horses' provender. Every dirty cavern and uncomfortable hole in the cliffs of Mar Saba had its solitary, if such they could be called, when 10,000 of them are said to have been destroyed in one massacre by the Saracens.

Gradually the monastic spirit changed into the Cœnobitic; the monks adapted La Bruyère's principle of solitude, and thought its advantages would be improved by having some one to communicate with upon the subject. St. Pachomius has the credit of founding this Cœnobitical or conventual life, and St. Anthony the monastic, or hermit superstition.

I have not space to follow these establishments through their varied history. They spread into Europe, and soon became so remiss (to use a mild term) in their conduct, that public indignation, perhaps prompted, and certainly assisted, St. Odo in their reformation in the eleventh century. The monasteries were then placed under the immediate protection of the Pope, and the bishops were deprived of all control over them. Then were founded the different "religious orders" that have since spread over the Christian world, and have each their representatives at Jerusalem.

When blighted hope or a blighted name has changed the heart to stone, a monk's cowl, like moss upon a ruin, may seem to become it well, but it is an indulgence, not a penance. The convent vow is a sort of moral suicide, by which the life-weary spirit, deserting its post, seeks refuge in a living tomb. The braver soul, "though faint and worn, unconquered still," tramples down its enervating sorrow, and seeks in action the means of rebuilding the ruined fabric of its former hope on a firmer and worthier foundation. Many a desperate man in the passionate and troubled ages preceding the crusades, who could not brook the torpor of the hermit life, embraced with eagerness

* D'Herbelot.

some painful pilgrimage or arduous enterprise that might employ his energies, while it substituted a new object for that which he had lost. Then the religious orders of knighthood were invented, and the ranks of the Templars and Hospitallers became filled with such numbers of volunteers as prove that the attributed romance of that period is not exaggerated. Some few zealous religionists devoted themselves at first to offices of charity, and to the protection of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem: of these, aged matrons and youthful maidens, be it remembered, formed a large proportion. This circumstance gave to the young institution an air of romance, and an infusion of chivalry, and thus constituted, it rapidly increased. Its members called themselves at first "poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ," but being allotted quarters within the enclosure of the Temple, they afterwards assumed the name of Templars.

The union of devotion and chivalry, the most powerful and congenial stimulants of human nature, proved still more attractive than even the solitary fanaticism: enthusiasts, who might have shrunk from the cowl, grasped eagerly the sword, which permitted to them the dear privilege of being men of violence in this world, and certain angels in the next.*

The Church beheld a means of acquiring powerful auxiliaries in the host that now thronged to the monk-martial ranks. St. Bernard organized them in due religious form, and the Pope declared himself their special bishop. The Templars appointed their first grand master, Hugh de Payens, early in the twelfth century, and the Hospitallers appear as a military body only a few years later.

The former at first became popular all over Christian Europe, and had immense possessions assigned to them, in England especially. Those of Palestine died, as became them, with the cause they served; but those of France and England, having no cause to sustain or be sustained by, fell under the popular ban, and were extirpated by Philip the Fair and Edward II.

The order of the Hospitallers originated in some pious persons attending two hospitals for pilgrims, established at Jerusalem in the eleventh century. It was not until many years afterwards that they imitated the Templars in becoming a military order, though they bore an equally distinguished part in the crusades. While the Templars soon sank into luxury and were universally feared and hated, the Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, maintained their honourable character and popularity in the islands of Rhodes and Malta, until their order was all but destroyed by Buonaparte, in 1798.

The Templars wore a white mantle, emblematic of the purity supposed to be assumed by the professing knight, and a red cross, the sign of his devotion to the Holy cause, instead of the usual device of gallantry or chivalry. Their banner was of black and white, and bore the epithet of Beau, or Bien-seant, intimating, in the language of the time, that they were fair towards their friends, but dark and terrible to their enemies.

The distinguishing dress of the Hospitallers was a black mantle with a white cross, and they were bound, like their Templar and Teutonic brethren, by the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.*

During the time of the crusades, there were few or no peaceful conventual establishments in Palestine. Whether it was that monkery became fused into chivalry, or that monasteries could not exist in the open country, and were obliged to arm in Jerusalem, I know not, but the monks of the Latin convent of the Terra Santa maintain that theirs is the only one that existed in the last crusade. There appears to have been a monastery in very early times at Mar Saba, but the monks were all massacred, and its walls left desolate, in the first invasion of the Turks.

After the capture of Acre by the Sultan's Tartars and Mamelukes, in 1291, the crescent shone triumphantly over the whole of Palestine: by such a light history has never been able to see her way, and we lose sight of the country and its inhabitants, until in 1432, when La Broquière achieved a pilgrimage. He found only two monks in Jerusalem, and they were in most cruel thraldom. In 1507, Baumgarten found a monastery of Franciscans, who were able to afford him shelter and security. Thenceforth, a more liberal or politic spirit seems to have animated the rulers of this doomed land, for pilgrimages have been comparatively safe, and the Christian religion almost respected, until England won back Jerusalem for the Turks, and then permitted them to prohibit the building of her church.

* Plenary indulgence was granted not only to the Templars and Hospitallers but to every Crusader; none ever required it more, or made more liberal use of the privilege.

* There were several other orders of monastic knighthood, such as the Teutonic, whence arose the kingdom of Prussia; the order of St. Lazarus, that of Calatrava, in Spain, &c.; but those of the Temple, and Hospital, or of St. John, absorb all the interest of the others. Their rivalry increasing with their prosperity, soon turned into hatred and hostility. They even leagued with Moslem powers against each other, and, in 1258, actually fought out their claims to superiority in a fair field without other combatants. The Knights of St. John were victorious, and scarcely a Templar remained alive.

At present there are numerous convents in Jerusalem, which have each their chapel in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Latin convent of the Terra Santa ranks first in antiquity and possessions, and is under the protection of the King of the French; its chapel is plain, but the most extensive in the edifice.

The Greek convent should come next in point of the number of its pilgrims, which involves its wealth. These last are, for the most part, Russians, and, like the pilgrims of all the other creeds, as it were, the tenants, whose rent for the temporary uses of the sacred place may be heard jingling throughout the chapels, as dissonantly as when the Temple of Solomon was similarly desecrated.

The Armenians are next in order, possessing the handsomest convent and the most ornamental chapel at the sepulchre, next to the Greeks. These Armenians resemble in some respects the Jews; dispossessed of their own country by the invasion of Abbas Shah, of Persia, they became, like the tribes of the "wandering foot and weary breast," dispersed abroad into all lands, but preserved their nationality and faith unimpared. They have still a monastery near lake Van, in Armenia; but their home, as a people, is everywhere throughout the East.

They claim apostolic descent from St. Bartholomew; and I am informed, by the best authority in Jerusalem, that their faith, in the abstract, is very orthodox. In their ritual they follow partly the Greek, partly the Coptic forms. The Armenians are divided into two sects—the original, or "the wine," and the papistical, or "vinegar," as they term them. The former acknowledge no supremacy beyond that of their own patriarchs; the latter have subjected themselves to the Pope of Rome: the former, in their conventual discipline, follow the rules of St. Basil; the latter, those of St. Dominic.

There are also Coptic, Abyssinian, and Maronite convents at Jerusalem, and indeed all the creeds of the Christian world have their representatives here. It is a marvellous sight, and one to make a spectator thoughtful, to see those various sectaries bending over the tomb whence all their hopes have risen, each believing that his own proud heart contains the only real hope—each setting his miserable yet complicated heresy above the grand and simple truth, and exalting the by-laws of his sect above the Magna Charta of the true soul.

Far be it from me to bring a sweeping accusation against any body of men, especially against the silent and defenceless victims of monastic enthusiasm. I would fain believe that many of these isolated beings serve God in singleness and purity of heart; I would fain hope that many have found peace in those dark cells, for which they have exchanged the bright world to which they were born heirs, heirs of freedom, light, and life. But what can be said in defence of those who prostitute the Sacred Mysteries to Mammon, who profane the very sepulchre of Christ with the foulest falsehood and the blackest hypocrisy?

By the tomb of the mortal friend we have loved and lost on earth, men meet even their enemies in peace; but, at the Saviour's tomb, the infidel watches with drawn sabre to prevent His followers from destroying one another! At this tomb the chiefs of two rival and hating creeds unite for once on Easter eve, but it is in the cause of fraud. Enclosed within the chapel, Greek and Armenian bishops call down fire from heaven by the intervention of a lucifer-match! Their believers strive madly to light their torches by this sacred flame, while the priests of other faiths stand scorning by, waiting until their turn shall arrive to triumph in their own followers' dastard superstitions. Each sect beholds the motes in her rival's eyes with a microscopic vision, while she thinks that all the beams in her own are beams of light.

All the chief priests that serve in the Holy Sepulchre belong to the different monastic establishments; and, if such be the fruit of the tree, what must be expected of the leaves and branches? The cloister no longer contains the noble spirits and gentle blood that once sought shelter there from temptation and from luxury. With the exception of the Superior of the convent, it is very rarely we meet a monk of Nature's aristocracy, or of any but the lowest grade of life. It is true that humble birth should form no objection, least of all in the matter of religion. "The poor have the Gospel preached unto them;" and the ambassadors of the most important tidings that ever reached the human ear were fishermen and publicans; but those who have to preach should at least have some intellectual culture, now that the days of inspiration are gone by; yet by far the greater number of the monks I have seen appear to be utterly illiterate and unenlightened.

Indolent as their lives in general are, they even lose the burden of self-discipline, by delegating the office of all moral government to the Superior of their convent—"ils ont abdiqué le gouvernement de soimême, tant cet empire fatigue son triste possesseur," as one of their own class has expressed it.*

There are at least a thousand monks in Palestine, chiefly Russians, Greeks, Spaniards, and Italians: they come hither for seven

* Dupaty.

years, and are frequently too indolent or apathetic ever to return to Europe. At Nazareth, Bethlehem, Mount Carmel, and even Jerusalem, we find them apparently uninfluenced by any affection or association with respect to their location, "any more than," as the author of Eōthen remarks, "the officers of a marching regiment are by stupid country quarters."

Except their (paid) hospitality to pilgrims, in itself a very questionable advantage, I am not aware of any utility in these monastic establishments. Nor do they claim any, to do them justice, except what they suppose is conferred on their own souls. I asked one of them if he supposed the path of salvation lay only through a convent; and he replied, "No doubt we might be saved in the world, but we are *safer* here."

Each convent, except the mere hospices, has what is called a "padre missionario" attached to it, but *his* duties likewise are confined to his convent. He overlooks the spiritual, as the Superior attends to the temporal welfare of the monks; nor are even these men adapted in any way to diffuse those talents which they wrap so carefully in their coarse napkins. The different sects are as little likely to change their tenets as rival banking establishments their clerks; and they wisely abstain from the attempt to make converts, with the exception of the Jesuits, who have an establishment in Beyrout, and another in the Lebanon.

I visited the former, and was much struck by the zeal, talent, and tact exhibited by the monks, who differed as much from their brethren of other orders, as our anti-corn-law agitators from a corn chandler. They have sixty children of the Greek and Maronite churches in their school at Beyrout, and at least as many whom they board and lodge in their institution in the mountains. They have made but little progress, notwithstanding their zeal and determination. The proud Moslem, the very essence of whose creed is abhorrence of idolatry, looks with contempt upon the worship and processions of saints, virgins, and crucifixes; while the Jew is far too well acquainted with the nature of pecuniary transactions to be much prejudiced in favour of a creed in which each friar is a beggar of alms, and each convent a bazaar of sanctities. The warehouse of relics and pilgrim ornaments at the Latin convent is furnished with such a stock as would seem inexhaustible, were it not that these articles are actually a subject of extensive merchandize in Europe, and, like a paper-currency, acquire all their value by passing through the hands of these spiritual dealers. There are about seven hundred persons employed at Bethlehem in the manufacture of beads, crosses, and mother-of-pearl carvings, &c. The monks receive these as raw material; but, having been rubbed on the Sepulchre, and having had mass said over them, they assume the value that makes them sought for by the devotees of the south of Europe.

I now turn to the ministers of the reformed faith in Palestine.

It is a difficult and delicate matter to speak with impartiality where one's feelings are interested, and one runs the chance perhaps, of erring in the opposite extreme, in the desire to avoid a questionable eulogy. I confess with diffidence that I am little qualified to speak upon the subject. I have spoken, for the most part statistically of the monastic establishments; and I shall endeavour to confine myself to the same principle in speaking of the Church of England and the American missions.

There is little of a practical and active missionary spirit to be found among the members of the Church of England, which is more remarkable in a psychological than in a religious point of view. With respect to the latter the large sums that are annually subscribed by the laity of our church is a convincing proof of the warm interest they take in the matter.* It appears strange, however, that, in a life so full of enterprise in the holiest cause, so well calculated for the exercise of energy, genius, and Christian charity, that the young and ardent spirits of our universities do not more frequently volunteer in the missionary cause. Assuming as a truth that the Hebrew lies in bondage in that very land where the liberty of the soul was first preached to man through Hebrew lips; assuming that, under the banner of our faith, that liberty is only to be found,—is the old crusading spirit so dead amongst us, that no one is now found to bear the banner of the Cross once more to Palestine in a purer cause?

When gain or glory may be won, where are the shores, the climate, or the savages, that deter the enterprising sons of England? While the fatal coasts of Demerara and the pestilential islands of the Chinese seas swarm with adventurers in the cause of conquest and of commerce, the Holy Land, the Land of Promise to us as to them of old, remains without one volunteer from the ranks of our English Universities.

Nevertheless, her cause is not the less faithfully served by the courageous few who at present sustain the responsibility of representing the primitive pure faith in Palestine; that faith which England has laboured so patiently in the closet, and fought so fiercely

* Last year the subscriptions amount to £25,325 8s. 0d.

in the battle-field to vindicate. Oxford contents herself with Jerusalem in the abstract, and has not a single representative of her principles in the cradle of the Saints.* There they might freely exercise their discipline, apart from the eyes of cavillers, and, perhaps, edify those who cling to the memory of the ancient Eremites. Cambridge sends annually some three or four hundred students to swell the ranks of the church militant, for which, however, they are content to keep garrison in quiet glebe and peaceful parsonage. Palestine knows not their name. With respect to the Dublin University, it has the responsibility of educating the priesthood of a church that is too truly missionary in its own green isle. No Christian born minister of the English Church was to be found in Syria when I was there, except the clergyman of Beyrout, and he has but recently exchanged a civil profession for holy orders.

The excellent bishop who holds the rule of our Church at Jerusalem is himself of Hebrew race, and was supposed to be on that account peculiarly well adapted for his arduous mission. This may perhaps be doubted, as well as the propriety of the exclusively missionary character of our church establishment at Jerusalem; but no one can doubt that Bishop Alexander, as far as in him lies, has faithfully, zealously, and most patiently discharged the difficult duties of his high commission. Since the days of the early church, no bishop has probably ever held charge of a more discouraging diocese, or been subject to greater discouragement.

Mr. Nicholayson had been for many years a missionary in Jerusalem previously to its being made an English bishopric. It was not my good fortune to make the acquaintance of this gentleman, who was absent in Samaria; but I have heard from all quarters the most unqualified testimonies to his high character, his talents, and his energies.† He is also, I believe, of Jewish race, as are the two other missionaries associated in his labours. These, together with Mr. W. at Beyrout, comprised the whole Church Missionary Establishment when I was in Syria, with the exception of its medical branches.

Honour to that faithful few who uphold the name and character of our church when there were none of her own sons to undertake the thankless service. Exiled from society, and all the advantages of civilization; wearing away their lives in a dangerous climate, in a lonely land; sustained only by the consciousness of their high calling, and uncheered even by success; they live, and watch, and pray, and die, half-forgotten by their countrymen, and entirely unknown to fame. Honour to their brave hearts! and may brighter prospects yet arise to cheer their arduous path of duty!

There is no impropriety or breach of confidence in confessing the slight success that has hitherto attended their efforts. It would be attributing a very unjust sordidness to the generous supporters of the Jewish mission, to suppose that their liberality could be increased or diminished by the success or failure of right means. As yet, there have been only eleven converts from the Jewish faith to ours; but two of these were Rabbis of high attainments and consideration in the synagogue, and the whole number have proved their sincerity by the sacrifices they submitted to. They were expelled with contumely from their synagogues, separated for ever from their wives and children, and deprived of any little means of livelihood they possessed, under the plea that it was required for their deserted families.

The Jews frequenting the Holy City at present amount in number to about 4,500 souls; and perhaps, since the days of Titus, their race has never enjoyed such privileges within its walls. This tolerance was not obtained from the liberality of the Turks, or the conciliating spirit of the Christian sectaries; charity never would have effected in this sordid city what the mere policy of Mehemet Ali brought about. He recognized this people simply as industrious agents; he knew that the population of Jerusalem was declining, and that they were the only people who were homeless enough in other cities, and interested enough in this, to swell its population. The Jew obtained perfect immunity under the Pasha's rule. Nevertheless, though comprising nearly one-third of the number of inhabitants, the Jews carry on but little business, partly for want of material, and partly because they are supported by plentiful alms from their European brethren. The contributions of the Jews, who are anxious to preserve a remnant of Israel in the city of their fathers, are received by the chiefs of the synagogue, and distributed by them among their poorer brethren. Thus enabled to live a life of idleness, they devote themselves to the study of their Scriptures and the Talmud; they are

* The Rev. Mr. Williams, who accompanied Bishop Alexander as his chaplain, is a graduate of Oxford, and a distinguished scholar, I believe. He, however, soon returned from Syria, and has recently published a compendious and learned Treatise on the "Holy City."

† The bishop, accompanied by the Rev. F. Ewald and Dr. McGowan, arrived at Jerusalem in January, 1841. Mr. Nicholayson first visited Jerusalem in 1826. Being soon after obliged to leave it, he visited Egypt, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and Malta, in his missionary character. In 1833, he returned to Jerusalem, where he has ever since remained, through the visitations of plague, war, and famine.

the most bigoted, fanatical, and controversial of their obstinate race.

Such is the soil upon which our missionaries have to labour; and who can wonder that the result is not one to be triumphantly spoken of?

I have before observed that Moslem converts are unknown; with one exception, at least, a convert at Beyrout, who, being mad, can scarcely be considered in that light. The missionaries have great hopes of being useful among the Jews at Saphet, and the Samaritans at Nablous, who display a great desire for information on matters connected with the Scriptures, and thus afford an easy opportunity of discussing their contents and promises.

The American missionaries have an establishment at Jerusalem, and also at Beyrout, and the Lebanon; two of their clergymen and a physician reside among their mountains, and board, lodge, and educate about fifty pupils there. These are the children of Druses, Maronite, and Greeks,—no Moslem ever entering a Christian school. The Americans have a printing-press, from which they issue a considerable number of Arabic tracts, and copies of the Scriptures for distribution among the people; but, on the whole, their labours have not been rewarded by any considerable success.

One of the most efficient means by which prejudices against the missionaries of our own and other churches are removed, and a sense of obligation is inspired and constantly renewed, is that of the medical establishments connected with the missions. Dr. McGowan,* an able and intelligent physician, presides over that at Jerusalem, and distributes advice and medicine gratuitously to the crowds who seek for his assistance. He had just completed a hospital when I visited him, in which were wards for poor natives of both sexes, and a couple of apartments for persons of a higher class.†

At Beyrout, there is an establishment maintained by "the Syrian Medical Aid Society," which appeared to me particularly judicious and likely to be of great benefit, beyond even that highest of all human charities—relief from suffering. This society is most fortunate in its officer, Dr. Kearns, who unites to talents and acquirements of the highest order an unostentatious but steady zeal for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the people who daily throng his door for medical relief.

The service of our church is performed twice every Sunday at Jerusalem by the bishop and one of the clergy attached to the mission. In the morning, the service is read in English, in the afternoon in German, for the sake of the Jewish converts. There is a neat little chapel in the enclosure, purchased by the mission, which, however, is only intended for temporary occupation while the church is being built. The congregation consisted of about thirty persons when I was there, among whom were the bishop's and the missionaries' families, the Prussian consul, one or two strangers, and eight converted Jews.

I have before alluded to the fact of permission having been granted by Mehemet Ali for the building of our church. Under his government, the walls were raised to the height of about two feet. England expelled the Egyptian from Syria, and gave Jerusalem to the Turks, who, in return, at once put a stop to the English church, alleging a Moslem law, which forbids the construction, or even the reparation of any place of Christian worship. Thus, for nearly three years, the British church at Jerusalem has been suffered to exist only as a subject for Moslem insult and for Jewish scoff. Vainly appeals have been made to the Porte for permission to proceed with this edifice; no means but bribery can forward applications for justice at Constantinople, and this the mission justly scorns to employ. Had it been a factory that was interfered with, or a commercial right that was invaded, England's sword would long since have severed the Gordian knots into which the Ottoman policy is ever weaving its contemptible cobwebs.*

* Dr. McGowan was lately assaulted by some Turkish soldiers; the indignation of the Jews, and their warm solicitude about him on the occasion, afforded a gratifying proof of how deeply they appreciated his kindness and services to their people.

† It may be taken either as a proof of the danger that the Rabbis anticipated from this exhibition of practical Christian charity towards the Jews, or at least as a proof of its efficacy, that Sir Moses Montefiore has lately sent over a Hebrew physician to Jerusalem. I heard from Dr. McGowan, however, that his practice was not in the least diminished by the arrival of this rival in his charitable labours, whom he spoke of as a gentleman of learning and liberality.

* It is to be observed, however, and at the same time regretted, that our church was founded only by the mission, and merely patronized, not directly owned, by England. Mr. Nicholayson has been at Constantinople for the last six months, endeavouring to obtain a firman for its completion; and, while these sheets are passing through the press, I have heard he has at length succeeded in his object, mainly through the interference of Sir Stratford Canning.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### THE PILGRIM.

Yet still 'mid Zion's fanes, in ruin laid,
The pilgrim still his murmuring vespers paid:
'Twas his to climb the tufted rocks, and rove
The chequered twilight of the olive grove;
'Twas his to bend beneath the sacred gloom,
And wear with many a kiss Messiah's tomb;
While forms celestial filled his trancéd eye,
The daylight dreams of pensive piety,
O'er his still breast the tearful fervour stole,
And softer sorrows charmed the mourner's soul.
*Palestine.*—HEBER.

"THE pardons of the Holy Land begin at Jaffa," says one high pilgrim-authority, and another assures us "that he who walks six paces into Palestine shall never lose his soul."

The practice of pilgrimage seems as ancient at least as the days of Jacob; for we find him using the expression as a metaphor for life:—"Few and evil have been the days of my pilgrimage" are the words of one to whom the subject was familiar.

No doubt the Church may have seen in it a means of discipline in early ages, and have had recourse to it for the soul's welfare, as physicians prescribe alteratives for the body. Pilgrimages necessarily involved privation, self-denial, and long contemplation of the holy scenes they were about to visit. Time for reflection, and removal from the scenes of temptation, may have frequently proved efficacious to the sinner, while his frame was braced by the toils of travel, and his mind was exercised by spiritual matters.

But pilgrimage soon became a price given for remission of sins; and, as the motive became less rational, larger numbers thronged to act upon its impulse. The greater the difficulty of visiting the Holy Sepulchre, the more meritorious it became. If it was advantageous to do so under Constantine, it was most excellent in the time of the Saracens, and beyond all value under the Carismians. Kings, queens, and nobles; old men and matrons, virgins, and even little children, hastened to secure the safety of their souls by their body's peril.

It was the wrongs done to the pilgrims that provoked the first Crusade; it was the intelligence gleaned by the Palmers that circulated Eastern knowledge and intelligence through the cloisters and the courts of Europe.

After the Christian empire in Palestine was utterly overthrown by the taking of Acre in 1291, pilgrimages to Jerusalem appear to have ceased altogether for some centuries. Compostella and Loretto were substituted: and 500,000 pilgrims are said to have visited the latter in the course of a single year. After the middle of the seventeenth century, the tide of pious wayfaring returned to its ancient channel, and the lay and clerical coffers at Jerusalem have been ever since refreshed by two great inundations annually; once by the Latins, and again by the Greeks, who keep their Easter, and perform their pilgrimages in consequence, at a different period.

It is supposed, that not less than 20,000* Christian pilgrims visit Jerusalem every spring; and many shiploads of Moslems, transported in steamers at the Sultan's expense, also arrive annually at Jaffa, on their route to Mecca.

The Moslems far exceed in number the Christian pilgrims. Burckhardt says 70,000 assembled at Mecca, and Pitt and the elder Niebuhr mention the same number. They approach their holy city with uncovered heads, bare feet, and only a sheet flung over their shoulders. The eccentric Haroun Alraschid is said to have walked all the way from Bagdad to Mecca in these weeds, with his wife, Zobeidé, similarly arrayed. However, they are also reported to have had rich carpets spread the whole distance for them to walk upon; and they had probably also awnings to protect their royal shaven scalps from the burning sun of the desert.

The Jew performs no pilgrimage; if he visits the Holy City, it is in the hope of dying there, and laying his bones in the Valley of Jehoshaphat; so great a privilege is this considered that Sandys saw shiploads of Jewish skeletons waiting for disembarkation at Jaffa, in order to be carried to Jerusalem for interment.

About a fortnight before their respective Easter days, the pilgrims of the Greek and Latin creeds begin to arrive in Palestine. Jaffa is the principal port, not only on account of its vicinity to Jerusalem, but from its individual sanctity. Hence Jonah set sail to preach repentance to Nineveh; here St. Peter dwelt in the house of his friend, Simon the tanner, which is shown by the friars to this day. Nor are these the only interesting localities of Jaffa. St Jerome tells us that he saw the remains of the broken chain by which Andromeda was bound to the rock, when delivered by Perseus from the monster of the sea!

Most of the pilgrims belong to the humbler classes, and even those who have the means abstain from making any show of luxury

* It is with diffidence I venture to give any Oriental statistic: I have heard the number of pilgrims variously estimated at from 5 to 25,000. Mr. Wild gives the population of Jerusalem at 35,000; I do not believe it amounts to above 12,000.

during their toilsome progress to Jerusalem. They find shelter and some slight refreshments in the hospices devoted to the exception of their various sects at Jaffa, Ramleh, and Jerusalem. They hear mass in the Holy Sepulchre, visit the manger at Bethlehem, bathe in the water of the Jordan, and having visited all the prescribed stations in and around Jerusalem, they return to Europe, respectable for the remainder of this life, and secure of eternal happiness in the next.

As the soldier-spirit seems epidemic wherever armies meet, and the landsman feels something of the sailor within him, as the ship that bears him battles with the waves—so one inevitably experiences something of the pilgrim enthusiasm on approaching Jerusalem, and endeavours to cherish the feeling as if it were a religion in itself.

In such a mood, even the traveller who professes a more spiritual faith might kneel upon Calvary, and prostrate himself at the Holy Sepulchre as a mere sentiment, if awe of the sacred places did not dispel every illusion, and sternly call upon the startled soul to put off all masquerading. Not so the professed pilgrim—the very ceremonies and the actor in them, from which we shrink as from a mockery, exercise a power and a spell over his excited heart. The gilding and the ornaments, the painted altar, and the embroidered priest, the pealing organ and the fragrant incense, all are full of mystery and awe to those for whom they are intended. Take, then, one brief glance at that sepulchre; visit the reputed Calvary, for the sake of the association, which is more important than locality; pause not to scoff at, to condemn, or coldly scrutinize, the rapt worshippers around you; but go forth in the humble hope that your faith is right, and that theirs is not altogether wrong.

Not far from the Church of the Sepulchre is the house assigned by tradition, as that wherein Pontius Pilate pronounced judgment upon the King of the Jews, and the window is shown where He was presented to the multitude, in the bitter mockery of royalty.

Familiar as the subject is to every Christian imagination, it never came upon my mind with such force before; and as I leant against an ancient pillar, the solemn scene came before me as vividly as if this were in truth the Hall of Doom, where God's decree was unconsciously administered by the corrupt Roman Judge. There the accused Deity stood before the tribunal of his creature, and suffered the penalty of man to be pronounced and expiated on Himself. He was accused of assuming the title of King, and lo! in his very punishment his royalty was symbolized! though that purple robe was flung over Him in mockery, it was not the less the robe of kings; though that crown was of thorns, it was not the less a royal diadem. Gold and silver and precious stones, are prepared for conquerors' brows by the victims of their tyranny—briars and blood-red drops were the offerings of the redeemed to their Saviour! Those rubies were of such value as to purchase man's salvation; that rugged crown was one day to be bowed down before by all the kings of earth.

Well might the gallant Godfrey refuse to be crowned with gold in this city, where *his* King was crowned with thorns.

Pensively let the traveller ascend the rugged Road of Sorrow,* along which the Cross was painfully borne; mournfully let him stand on Calvary; then gratefully turn to the Mount of Olives, in pilgrim language called the Mount of Blessing; and breathe a prayer that the experience of that day may not be lost upon his soul.

Let us leave to those who make livelihood by them such scenes as the house where Mary dweit, where Dives revelled, and where dogs licked the sores of Lazarus; the spot where the cock crew, the cavern where Peter wept. Enough for us, that on this soil the Saviour laid down his life, so transcendently heroic, so meekly humble: enough for us, that these skies above us received Him risen, and still bespeak his presence. We envy not the man who can merge the pilgrim in the traveller, and the believer in the antiquary.

Often have I wandered among the desolate enclosures of Jerusalem by the moon's mournful light, that seemed to harmonize with the ruins round. The streets were silent as the grave; the night-wind, like a wailing spirit, alone wandered through the forsaken shrines; or sighed among the cypress and the palm-trees that towered against the dark blue sky. Sometimes the howl of the wild dog struck upon the ear; and more than once I was startled by the voice of a poor Scotch maniac exclaiming in passionate accents, "Woe! woe! woe to Zion!"

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A residence in Jerusalem, for a solitary pilgrim like myself, is one of the strangest experiences of life. Apart from the associations by which it is hallowed, it is unlike every other city of the earth. Its population consists, as it were, not of its own people, but rather resembles the inmates of some great caravanserai, accidentally huddled together, denizens of distant places, professors of various creeds, each hating and fearing the other as an alien and a stranger.

Here are mean but busy bazaars, crowded

* Via Doloroso.

with the inhabitants of every Eastern nation, each seeking his peculiar articles of food or dress, and endeavouring, in his own tongue, to obtain it for the smallest possible portion of his own coin. There are silent and lonely streets, paved with huge blocks of marble, and consisting, for the most part, of blank and gloomy walls. At one corner of the city you meet the scowl of some malignant Jew, who considers your presence a profanation to his Holy City, and at another you encounter a fanatical Moslem, cursing the unhallowed foot that approaches the precincts of Omar's Mosque. Each sectary of the Cross or Crescent, Greek or Latin churchman, Druse or Metouali, regards his heretic neighbour with pious horror, intermingled with contempt. The candjiar and the pistol in every sash; the fierce moustache and fiery eyes on every countenance; the watchful and restless, or gloomy look which every one wears; the unaccountable absence of children from the streets; the women gliding about, few, and, as if fearful, in their strange disguises; the monks of the various orders, with aspects as rugged and dismal as their sloven dress; such is the population amongst whom you dwell.

There is no place of relaxation or of public amusement in this mournful city. This is sensibly felt by the traveller; not as requiring such resources for himself, but as imprinting a character of gloom and cheerlessness on the people who pass their lives within these walls, or only venture out to weep over the tombs in the Moslem cemetery, or the valley of Jehoshaphat.

The greater part of the time I passed at Jerusalem I was as solitary as when I was in the desert. In the cool of the morning, I used to ride up the Mount of Olives, or explore the glens and caverns, once the refuge places of the Prophets, now the resort of robbers and outlaws. If I had been reconnoitring for Titus, I could not have made myself more familiar with every feature of the doomed city than solitude and curiosity conspired to make me during these frequent rambles. Towards noon, I was driven by the heat to take shelter in my apartments, which I shall describe, as affording a specimen of the houses of Jerusalem. I only passed one night in the dreary hospice of the Terra Santa, and the next evening found myself, on my return from a distant ride, the tenant of Abou Habib, in the Via Dolorosa.

He was a portly old Christian, very like Lablache in the garb of Figaro, only that a long robe of brown silk enveloped his person, and a capacious turban his broad brow. He could speak but few words of Italian, and the gesticulations with which he endeavoured to express some difficult emotion in Arabic were irresistibly ludicrous. He piqued himself on his cookery, and was continually inventing some new abomination of grease and rice, to tempt my appetite. There was a hospitality about the old fellow, notwithstanding his reputed avaricious propensities, that prevented me from ever scrutinizing his bills. If he made the most of his guests in one respect, he also did in every other.

My servant was quite superseded in the culinary department. As soon as I rose in the morning, it was Abou Habib who presented my coffee; when I came in from riding, pipe and coffee were handed by Abou Habib; and in a few moments rissoles in vine leaves, or pieces of pilau in cucumbers, with a broiled fowl, and a flask of Vino d'Oro, were presented by Abou Habib. If I clapped my hands throughout the day, the same portly figure presented itself; if I fell asleep on the divan, I found him fanning away the flies: at dinner, he was at once cook and butler; in the evening, he was killing chickens while he whistled a tune, or plucking them, as he chanted some unintelligible old song: he even climbed the housetop, to offer my pipe, and at length actually took to grooming my horses.

The entrance to this house of hospitality was by a narrow flight of stone steps, leading out of the Via Dolorosa; a door opened thence into a courtyard, where my horses were stabled in an enclosure, and picketted to the wall by the fetlock; a corridor, in which were doors leading to a kitchen on one side, and sleeping-rooms on the other, connected this outer with an inner court, shaded by a few lemon and cypress trees. In this were my apartments, consisting of a sleeping-room and a large wainscoted chamber, surrounded with a divan, and diversified with a variety of shelves, presses, and cupboards.

Opposite were the sleeping apartments of my host, his buxom wife, and her blooming sister. These women seemed to lead a life of perfect idleness, for the indefatigable Abou Habib was all in all, and monopolized all the offices of the establishment, even to dressing, in more senses than one, a young son of his, who was the plague of the household.

My host was civil and humble, even to servility; but the female members of his family appeared to be as free from constraint as they were from forwardness. During a short but severe illness, they attended me with the greatest kindness, and afterwards gave me lessons in Arabic, in folding turbans, and other Eastern accomplishments. Accustomed for six months to see only grim, bearded men, about me, I felt that life was very much improved by the presence of even this specimen of the softer sex.

It was pleasant to see their graceful figures moving about in the courtyard; it was pleasant, now and then, to look up from one's book, as the window was darkened by a slight turban, from which rich tresses gushed over the shoulder, and dark, but gentle eyes shone beneath it; then came some simple question as to lighting a pipe, or want of coffee, and the Presence passed away. Yet, most of all, it was pleasant, when evening fell, as I lay upon my divan, and looked up to the clear bright sky against which the cypresses trembled in the night breeze, to hear the low, sweet, plaintive voices in which these Eastern women sang the songs of their historic Land.

These women were Christians, and Hebron was their native place; they had never heard of the Bible, but the name of the Koran was familiar to them. On Sundays and Fridays they went to chapel, gaily dressed, but, according to the Eastern usage among Christians as well as Moslems, they seldom appeared at other times in the street. Their dress in the house consisted of a close-fitting tunic, buttoned from beneath the bosom for some distance down, thence open, to allow free motion to their limbs, that were clothed with very full, loose trousers, tied at the ankle, and falling over the slippered foot. The bosom was generally open, or but partially enclosed by the crape garment within; a light turban or a handkerchief of Damascus silk covered the head, from which the rich hair flowed free, or was plaited into two long braids.

In the streets, the Christian women wear the "yashmak" or veil across the face, as the Moslems do, applying the term "barefaced" to a fact and not a principle; but in the house it is entirely laid aside. The women of both religions pass much of their time on the housetops, peeping through the circular tiles, that are built into a wall, so as to admit the air, but conceal the inhabitants of each roof. But to return to the pilgrims.

At the festival of Easter, the Pilgrims assemble in thousands to visit the Jordan. The Arabs know this season as well as the sportsman does the 1st of September, and assemble in tribes along the road to Jericho in the hope of booty. The Turkish governor always sends a guard with each caravan, aware of the importance of pilgrims to Jerusalem, and willing to afford every facility to this, as to any other enterprise conducive to the revenue.

It is an imposing sight to witness that long array of pilgrims winding through the gloomy Passes of the Judean hills, with the bright sunshine flashing on the bristling spears of the Bedouin, and the gorgeous trappings of the Albanian cavalry; the long necks of camels peering high over the mass, and the eager, huddling movement of the timorous crowd. Woe to the poor pilgrim who lags behind, or is overtaken at nightfall on the outskirt of the camp! They are vigilantly beset by the children of Ishmael, who consider the privilege of robbing as being theirs by Divine right. "God," say they, "gave to Isaac the land of Canaan, but to Ishmael the Desert, and all that is found thereon."

Shortly before my arrival at Jerusalem, a Mr. G., an English traveller, had joined himself to one of these pilgrimages to the Jordan for the sake of security, as well as of curiosity. When about half-way to Jericho, he happened to linger behind the caravan, and was cantering along the lonely road to overtake it. Suddenly his horse was checked by a resistless grasp, and himself thrown to the ground. The moment before there was no living creature visible in that wild glen; now, on recovering from the shock, he saw an Arab bending over him, with his spear pointed at his bosom; two other Bedouins stood by, and his horse had disappeared. Not understanding the menacing injunction to lie still, he tried to rise, and was instantly pinned to the ground by the Arab's lance. Seeing that resistence was hopeless, he submitted to his fate, and the two Bedouins approached with the request, "Cousin, undress thyself, thy aunt is without a garment." This is the usual form in the desert, in whose slang the word "aunt" seems to figure in somewhat of the same capacity that "uncle" does in ours; but the "balls" are of lead, not brass.

As Mr. G. displayed considerable reluctance in assisting the wants of his unknown relative, the Bedouin stripped him with wonderful despatch. They soon left him in a state of utter nudity, and, in reply to all his remonstrances, only returned him his hat, which they looked upon with contempt, and useless even to his unscrupulous "aunt." They even took away the hatband, and then left him to return as best he might to the crowded metropolis, clothed only in a narrow-brimmed beaver.

Arrived at the Jordan, the pilgrims rush into the deep and rapid river with such enthusiasm that they are not unfrequently drowned, and carried away by the stream. The Greek and Latin church has each its peculiar spot, where Christ was baptized, as well as its peculiar Easter, so they never interfere with each other here, as in the Holy Sepulchre. The leader of the troops only allows a certain time for the immersion, and then re-forms his caravan to return to Jerusalem.

In the valley of the Jordan there is much wood, and there formerly were many palms: here each pilgrim cuts himself a staff, and is thenceforth a "palmer," or one whose pilgrimage is accomplished.

Notwithstanding the number of foreigners thus annually arriving at Jerusalem, there has been no representative of European powers established here, until very recently. A Protestant and an Englishman was the first, and a better person for that arduous situation could not have been selected than Mr. Young. Very zealous for his country, and very firm for its privileges, he has yet had sufficient tact and suavity to avoid having ever come into collision with the Turkish authorities. This was a more difficult matter in the first exercise of European interference than may at first appear. Highly educated, moreover, and taking an active interest in matters relating to our Church, he has made his arduous situation a means of interest and improvement to himself, and a real advantage to all his countrymen. If I might introduce a lady's name into these pages, I would fain dwell on the advantage that not only our travellers, but our national character derives from the grace and charm that the limited society at Jerusalem owes to the drawing-room of the British Consulate.

The king of Prussia, with his characteristic liberality and right-mindedness, immediately on the appointment of the English bishopric, appointed a Prussian Consul at Jerusalem. I am much indebted to Dr. Schultz, who now holds that office, for his courtesy, hospitality, and information, which last, especially, he possesses in the highest degree.

The king of France has also sent a consul to Jerusalem, who immediately embroiled himself with the Turkish authorities, and has been in difficulties ever since. To do him justice, however, he vindicated the right of hoisting a Christian flag in the Holy City, and procured the recall of the Pasha of Jerusalem, who had given much dissatisfaction to the Europeans and other Christians.

The Turks have a garrison in Jerusalem of about eight hundred soldiers. The surrounding country, nominally under their authority, is in fact ravaged by the Bedouin up to the very walls of Jerusalem, and the different villages look only to themselves for protection. Jerusalem is ill-adapted at present for a military post: it is commanded by the Mount of Olives, the Hill of Evil Counsel, and the Hill of Scopas, within half cannon-shot. Its supply of water is very limited, and depends in summer altogether upon tanks. Kedron has long ceased to flow during the warm months, and wells are unknown. The road from Jaffa is almost impassable for artillery, and affords unequalled facilities for guerilla troops to fight, and cut off supplies.

Jerusalem is about forty miles from the sea, and twenty-four from the Jordan. There is very little wheat grown, and very few cattle fed in its neighbourhood. Its present population, of about 12,000 * souls, finds a very scanty subsistence, and have no commerce whatever to assist them. Alms and pilgrims are the principal, if not the only, sources of wealth. The Jews, Latins, and Greeks, are entirely dependent on such resources.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### BETHLEHEM.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid!
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!

BISHOP HEBER.

I FELT little inclination to linger at Jerusalem after I had explored the prescribed localities, and such as I had selected for myself. It was now midsummer; and the sun, reflected from the white walls and marble pavement, seemed to surround me with a fiery glow. The very zephyrs were so languid from the heat, that they refused any longer to wander through the streets, as narrow as these were made, in order to stimulate their energies: the scorched leaves had no quiver; the living city was more silent under the oppression of that sunshine than at midnight; and the whole world seemed to be gradually growing red-hot. I felt escape was absolutely necessary, and prepared to avail myself of an invitation from our bishop to Bethlehem, where he had been staying for some time.

My last hour at Jerusalem was passed in a negotiation with Abdallah, a Sheikh of Bedouin, to escort me to the Dead Sea; and my last moments were devoted to a final visit to the Sepulchre.

The Sheikh assured me that the way was very dangerous, and that not less than a dozen horsemen and twice that number of dismounted men could confer any chance of safety. As he sat upon my divan, perfectly free from embarrassment as from presuming, he looked so like a gentleman that I was almost tempted to believe him. It is true, that his chin had never known a razor, or his foot a boot; that his dress consisted of a sheet, with some cunningly-devised holes and folds to give it the appearance of

* Viz. 4,000 Moslems, 3,500 Christians, 3,500 Jews, and 800 Turkish troops in garrison.

a Roman toga; but he had a fine bold brow, and fearless eye, and a graceful, courteous bearing, whereby gentle blood vindicated itself in this aristocrat of the desert, as clearly as in the Christian noble.

I told him I asked for his escort for the sake of his society and guidance, not for protection; that, as the desert was his property, I was willing to pay for permission to pass through it, but had no idea of taking an army with me. "Well, then," said he, "five horsemen and ten dismounted men shall accompany the Effendi: his life would not be safe with less." I replied that, if a tribe should attack us, fifteen men would avail but little; if only straggling marauders, that we could defend ourselves. "In short," I added, "it does not become an Englishman to travel like a merchant, or an old woman, who requires to be taken care of: if you choose to accompany me with half a dozen of your Bedouins, it is well; if not, I shall go alone, as I have already done through Syria, and if any accident befalls me, you will fall under suspicion."

It is unnecessary to add that danger never entered into the Sheikh's calculation; if the representation of it had obtained a few hundred piastres more from me, it was *taib*; if it actually presented itself, it was *taib* still. He bargained stoutly for an exorbitant price, because his tribe expected him to prove himself a subtle lawyer, as well as a bold leader; but once the price was fixed, he said no more about it, and money was never named again between us.

After finishing his pipe and coffee, he departed to make preparations for the journey, and I soon heard his Arab steed galloping down the steep and stony street.

My own poor horse had never recovered from the effects of his cruise in the Mediterranean; and, although nursed by Abou Habib, Salomé, and Eleesa, assisted by the best medical advice in Jerusalem, he was quite unfit to resume his journey. Leaving him, therefore, in charge of my fair friends, I mounted an Arab mare of the desert breed, and rode forth to take a last view of the Mount of Olives, and to examine the Tombs of the Kings.

M. Schultze, the Prussian consul, kindly accompanied me, and proved clearly where the ancient walls had run; they embraced the hill of Bezetha and a much wider extent than the present towards the north, but a less extent towards the north-west, leaving Calvary outside their circuit.

Passing through some thin olive groves, we came to the Tombs of the Kings, which did not appear to advantage after those of Egypt; but are interesting and curious, nevertheless.

A square enclosure is hewn out of the solid rock, like a huge tank; into this we crept, through a small orifice, on our hands and knees, and found the vertical sides of the enclosures hollowed out into small chambers, from which opened cryptæ. Though devoid of ornament, the excavations were admirably done, and the stone doors turned upon stone pivots, that were once let into the rock. The only carving was on the exterior, and seems to be of Herod's time.

After visiting the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemene, I rode round the walls, and set forth across the Plain of Rephaim to visit Bethlehem.

The distance is about five miles, and the way lies for the most part over arid and dreary hills, with here and there a scanty crop of wheat in the intervening valleys, and an occasional herd of goats browsing invisible herbage, under the guardianship of a herdsman as shaggy as his flock, and as brown and almost as bare as the rocks around him.

Occasionally we catch glimpses of the wild mountain scenery that wraps the Dead Sea in its barren bosom. No other landscape in the world is like this. It resembles rather some visionary sketch of Martin's, roughly done in raw sienna, than anything in Nature; distorted piles of cinderous hills, with the Dead Sea lying among them like melted lead, unlighted even by the sunshine that is pouring so vertically down as to cast no shadow.

We pass the convent of Mar Elyas on a hill upon the left, and the tomb of Rachel, in a valley on the right. Thence the scenery becomes more attractive; some olive groves, intermingled with small vineyards, clothe the hills; rich corn-fields are in the valleys; and lo! as we round a rugged projection in the path, Bethlehem stands before us!

This little city, as it is called by courtesy, has an imposing appearance, walled round, and commanding a fertile valley from a rugged eminence. I rode through steep and rocky streets, that were crowded with veiled and turbaned figures in their gala dresses (for it was a festival), and was much struck by the apparent cleanliness and comfort of this little Christian colony. Ibrahim Pasha, hearing complaints of quarrels between the Christian and Moslem inhabitants, and finding that the former were more numerous, ordered the latter to emigrate; so that Bethlehem is now almost exclusively Christian.

The beauty of the women of Bethlehem has often been observed upon, but I confess it did not strike me as remarkable; nor did I see a countenance there that betokened Jewish blood.

It is remarkable that the Madonna of Ra-

phael, with which, perhaps, all Christendom associates the idea of a portrait, has nothing of the Jewish character; nor does any other master appear to have borne in mind the race that she belonged to. Except the Madonna of Murillo, and the celebrated Negro Virgin, all the pictures of value that we possess are exquisitely fair, and rather an abstraction of feminine grace, sweetness, and purity, than a resemblance of a "daughter of the house of David."

We forget that Mary was a Nazarene, and eagerly scrutinize each maiden face in Bethlehem, for a realization of the blessed countenance that has so long haunted our imaginations—in vain: she remains as it should be, a half-divine abstraction.

The reader may smile, as I do now; but it was with something like grave respect I looked upon each carpenter in Bethlehem; the very donkeys assumed an additional interest; and the cross, with which they are so singularly marked, a meaning; the camels seemed as if they had just come from the East with gifts, and the palm-tree offered its branches to strew the holy ground; every shepherd appeared to have a mystic character; and, when night came with stars, I looked eagerly for His, and tried to trace it over Bethlehem.

Well, these are dreams that soon dispel themselves, as we alight at the walls within which an Armenian, Greek, and Latin convent are gathered round the place of the Nativity, under one roof.

Entering by a very low door and long passage, almost upon hands and knees, I stood up under the noble dome of the church of St. Helena. The roof, constructed of cedar wood from Lebanon, is supported by forty huge marble pillars, showing dimly the faded images of painted saints. The whole building is silent, dirty, and neglected-looking, but of noble proportions. From its court are parked off the different chapels belonging to the rival sects. The Armenian is the handsomest and wealthiest of these, as its friars are by far the most respectable.

The chapel of the Nativity is a subterranean grotto, into which you descend in darkness that gives way to the softened light of many silver lamps suspended from the roof. Notwithstanding the improbability of this being the actual place of the Nativity, one cannot descend with indifference into the enclosure which has led so many millions of pilgrims in rags or armour during 1800 years from their distant homes. It is, however, impossible to recognize anything like reality in the mass of marble, brass, and silken tawdry ornaments, and one leaves this most celebrated spot in the world with feelings of disappointment.

I then hastened to pay my respects to our bishop, whom I found in the refrectory of the Armenian convent, which the monks had surrendered to his use and that of his family. I shall long remember with grateful pleasure the evenings I passed in that Armenian Convent, where the kindness and piety of our bishop appeared to have conciliated towards him the affection and respect of all the monks.

I should have mentioned that, on his lordship's arrival in Jerusalem, the Armenian patriarch at once recognized his high commission, and waited on him with professions of regard and consideration that were afterwards fully borne out. The Greek patriarch imitated his example; and, as the convents form the only places of hospitality in Palestine, both the Armenians and the Greeks placed theirs at the service of our bishop and his family, and seemed pleased and flattered when they were visited. The Roman patriarch alone stood aloof from his brother in the Church, and no communication has ever past between the prelates of the Latin Church and ours.

It was a striking sight, that ancient refectory, gloomy with carved panelling and painted glass, occupied only by the prelate of a different creed, and the fair girl, his daughter, who sat beside him. As the dark-robed monks passed by the grating that separated the refectory from the corridor, each laid his hand upon his heart, and made a graceful reverence, with his eyes still fixed upon the ground.

After dinner, as there was still half an hour of daylight, and a bright moonlight to fall back upon, I mounted my horse, and, accompanied only by my dragoman, rode forth to the Pools of Solomon, about six miles distant, on the road to Hebron.

This neighbourhood has a bad character, and I was warned more than once of danger from the Arabs, but I had so often received similar intimations that I now heard them as mere common-places. In the hurry of departure, my servant had come away from the convent unarmed, but he cantered along after me as cheerfully as if clad in panoply, and seemed to consider a small bottle that peeped suspiciously from his holsters as a good substitute for more offensive weapons.

As we rode out of the gates, I met a troop of girls carrying water from the well, who presented a most picturesque appearance. With one hand they supported the vase-like vessel on the head, with the other they held up their light drapery, which at every graceful movement revealed their symmetrical proportions. Delicate complexions, although united to the ever-brilliant Eastern eye, distinguished them from all the Arab women

I had yet seen; while the finely-cut lip, thin, but vermilion bright, and a Grecian profile, distinguished them from the Jewish race. The instep was finely arched, so that only the heel and fore-part of the foot left an impression in the sand, and the carriage and attitude of the body were most graceful. Such at least was one whom I stopped upon the steep pathway to ask my way of. I think I see her now, as her round arm detatched itself from the folds of her blue mantle, and was raised with pointed finger in the direction of Hebron. Then, looking up, she said something about night and robbers, and, shaking her head as I smiled in reply, she put up her second hand to steady the water-vessel, and resumed her path.

We now pushed forward at a gallop over a wild and rocky tract, where the pathway was scarcely visible among the fragments with which it was thickly strewn; yet this has been a highway from the days of Abraham, and we read of the constant use of chariots along these roads. Now the way lay over a smooth and slippery rocky surface; now, narrowed between blocks of stone, it was covered with tangled roots, or seamed by wide fissures. All the same to my bold Arab courser seemed smooth turf, or rugged rock. Eagerly she swept along over hill and hollow, as if it was a pastime; bounding from rock to rock with the ease of a gazelle and the mettle of a bloodhound. The evening was sultry warm, but no stain darkened her silken skin, not a pant escaped from her deep chest, not a spot of foam flecked the Mameluke bit.

The sun was just setting in Eastern glory as we reached a vast embattled Saracenic castle, on which ruin has made but slight impression. Beneath it lie the Pools of Solomon, from which water was once conveyed to Jerusalem. They are in good repair, but quite dry, and indeed it would take all the water I have yet seen in Judea to fill them. They are three in number, at three different levels, and measure respectively about 600, 500, and 300 feet in length.

I returned more slowly and pensively to Bethlehem, by the light of as brilliant a moon as ever shone over this hallowed Land in its proudest hour. On the fields through which I was passing, the glory of the Lord once shone around, and the announcement of "Peace on earth, good-will toward man," was heard through this calm air from angel voices. In the distance, clear against the sky, stood "the city of David," from out whose gloomy walls arose the Light of the world.

As I rode thoughtfully along, I did not observe that my servant was missing: I had heard a shot, but such sounds are too familiar to excite attention in a country where every man goes armed. I rode back to the valley where I had seen him last, but there was no sign of him; a few minutes afterwards, I met a goatherd with a musket slung upon his shoulder, which I seized hold of, as I demanded intelligence of the dragoman. The man did not appear surprised, said he had heard a shot, and seen a man galloping off towards the mountains. At the same time, he opened the pan of his firelock, to show that *he* had not fired. I offered him a piece of gold if he would accompany me in my search, but he pointed silently to his flock, and moved on. I then rode along each path, and ascended every eminence, shouting out Nicola's name, which the echoing hills took up, and carried far away. There was no sign of him, and the rocky pathways afforded no trace. I rode back to Bethlehem, and the governor not being visible, I enlisted some volunteers in the pursuit; I then went in search of the bishop, to request that his mounted servants might assist me. He was in the convent chapel, and, hurried as I was, I paused for a moment to contemplate the scene that revealed itself as I drew aside the tapestry that hung across the doorway.

The altar blazed with gold, and the light of the consecrated lamps showed richly on its embroidered velvet drapery. The Superior of the convent, with a reverend grey beard falling over his dark purple robes, had his right hand raised in the attitude of declamation, while the Bishop, in his black dress, would have been scarcely visible in the gloom, but for the white drapery of the lady, his daughter, who leant upon his arm, and followed with her eyes the arguments of each speaker. The sudden change, from excitement, and hard riding, and crowded streets, and eager voices, to that calm, solemn chapel scene, was so imposing, that I almost forgot my haste in its contemplation; but the clank of sword and spur broke dissonantly into the conversation of the churchmen. They turned to me with anxious and kind attention, and the bishop immediately placed his groom and janissary at my disposal.

I did not wait while the servants were arming themselves and mounting; but, leaving directions for them to try the Jerusalem road, and directing some armed citizens, who pressed eagerly to be employed, to disperse themselves over the neighbouring hills, I rode away to the ill-favoured village, in the direction of which my servant had last been seen. This place bore an evil character in the country; it sold little but wine and spirits, and bought nothing; yet it was walled round as carefully as if it contained the most respectable and valuable community.

Unwearied as in the morning, my gallant mare dashed away over the rocky valley, exulting in her strength and speed. She pressed against the powerful Mameluke bit, as if its curb were but a challenge, and it was only by slackening the rein that she could be induced to pause over some precipitous descent, or tangled copse; then, tossing her proud head, she would burst away again like a greyhound from the leash.

Her hoofs soon struck fire out of the flinty streets of the unpopular village; few people appeared there, and those few seemed to have just come in from the country, for every man carried a musket, and wore a knife in his sash. They answered sulkily to my inquiries, and said that no horseman had entered their village for many a day.

I now saw that it was useless to seek further until daylight, and pushed on towards a different gate from that by which I had entered. A steep street, whose only pavement was the living rock, led down to this; as I cantered along, I could see a group of dark figures standing under the archway, and the two nearest of the party had crossed their spears to arrest my passage. I could not have stopped if I would; neither the custom of the country, nor the circumstances of the case, required much ceremony; so, shouting to them to clear the way, I gave spurs to my eager steed, and burst through them as if I was "switching a rasper." The thin spears cracked like twigs; the mob rebounded to the right and left, against the wall; and though they were all armed, mine was the only steel that gleamed, as a fellow rushed forward to seize my bridle. The next moment my mare chested him, and sent him spinning and tangled in his long, blue gown, while we shot forth into the open moonlight, and, turning round a pile of ruins, were in a moment hidden from their view.

This is a sort of incident that does not happen every night; but somehow it appeared quite natural then, and I scarcely alluded to it in relating my adventures that evening. I only mention it here as characteristic of the state of the country. The citizens probably only meant to inquire, perhaps demand, the real reason of my untimely visit; but the result would probably have been an uncomfortable one to a solitary stranger.

I now held on my way for Bethlehem, when, at a turn of the path, I came suddenly upon an armed party. They proved to be only some Bethlehemites, however, who had come out to inform me that my servant was found. They would scarcely believe that I had been in and *out* of that "den of robbers," as they harshly called the village I had just been visiting, and at the same time requested a reward for their services. A few minutes afterwards I found my unfortunate dragoman at the convent, pale and trembling, and leaning against his foaming horse, while a crowd of men, women, and children were listening, with open mouths and eyes, to his adventures.

He had forgotten his rosary at the Pools of Solomon, and rashly turned back to look for it. As he was descending a steep part of the road, an Arab had fired at him from behind a rock, so close that his jacket was singed, while the bullet had torn off part of the embroidery of his collar. I believe the poor fellow would have preferred having his skin scratched, but he was so terrified that as he galloped off he mistook the road, and never drew rein until he reached Jerusalem. Here he found the gates closed, and the guard refused to admit him: he had been met at last by the bishop's janissary making the best of his way back to Bethlehem.

I had enjoyed my moonlight gallop, notwithstanding my anxiety for the cause of it; yet I found it a most pleasant change to join the quiet tea-party in the refectory. It was a rare and real pleasure to enjoy such society, under such circumstances; and the evening flew rapidly away, and the convent's chimes announced the hour for prayer. Then, in the midst of that gloomy convent, I heard the noble liturgy of our own creed read by a father of our own Church, whose voice was echoed by the spot from whence that worship sprung.

And afterwards we walked on the convent's terraced roof, and traced by the clear moonlight the various scenes of interest that lay beneath us. In yonder valley Ruth was found gleaning by her gentle kinsman; yonder mountain is Goliah's hill. Among those fields on which a glory seems still to shine, the shepherds received the angel tidings that Christ was come. Beneath us was the manger where he lay; around us the objects on which his infant eyes unclosed; from beyond those distant, pale blue mountains, came the "kings of Arabia and Saba, bringing gifts;" and over the hill country opposite, in after-ages, came other pilgrims in warrior guise or humble weed, ready to lay down their lives, their loves—anything but their sins—upon that hallowed spot.

It was late when we retired for the night; a lay-brother of the convent showed me the way to the cell I was to occupy, and, depositing his little cresset upon the floor, left me, with a salutation, to my repose.

The bed, or rather pallet, lay upon the ground, but it was neat, and the sheets looked clean and fresh. No chair or table graced the apartment, but the white walls had not a speck of dirt upon them; and

even the busy spiders of Palestine had not been able to establish a cobweb in the little window.

The following morning at daybreak I was awakened by singing voices, which sounded rather strangely through those solemn cloisters. On descending into the open space in front of the convent, I found a bridal party assembled, and, there being some difficulty on the part of the priests, the villagers were amusing themselves with a dance during the delay.

Now, a dance at sunrise is rather a singular occurrence; but it was not less so than the solemn and measured step of the dancers, which David might have imitated without any appearance of levity. Michal would scarcely have smiled at this choral band, that appeared like a procession swayed about and slowly undulating to a hymn-like music.

All the performers were women; the men, including the bridegroom, decorously sate apart, smoking their pipes with an air of most gentlemanly indifference. The poor little bride (who was only twelve years old) stood all the while enveloped in a sort of tent, that moved with her like a May-bush on a chimney-sweep. This singular envelopment, which exactly resembled a huge kaleidoscope covered with pink silk, permitted to us no glimpse of its fair occupant, who was surrounded by a group of staid matrons.

The dance went on, mean time, with perseverance, if not with spirit. Wreathing their arms round one another, they advanced and retreated in two parties, keeping time to their own choral voices; then, forming in a circle, they danced round and round without a smile. Their gay and various drapery floated in picturesque masses of purple or crimson folds, as they moved along; their dark tresses fell in showers behind them, or were looped up with golden ornaments or coloured beads; their voices were passing sweet, and the music that they made seemed to me tender, though very wild.

While this was going on, the fathers of the expectant couple were bargaining with the priests about the marriage. The dispute was carried on with the usual violent gesticulations, and arose from the priests having raised their price, as I understood. The villagers had brought one dollar, the usual sum demanded for the business; but the minister required four. The conference at length broke up angrily. I grieve to say its issue was unfavourable, and I saw the bridal procession move off with regret. I would willingly have furnished the necessary expenses, but I confess I grudged them to the ill-favoured, harsh-spoken friar, who, probably, after all, acted only from necessity.

As I had had some conversation with the Elders of the party, I made an offering towards the dowry of the kaleidoscope, and inquired whither they were going with the bride. "To the Santon,"* they replied, "who will do the business quite as well, and only charge half-a-dollar."

When I returned to the convent, I found the priest still standing at the door of the Latin convent, and ventured to inquire whether this would not afford a dangerous precedent. "Not so," he said; "before a child is born, they'll come here to be married properly; for they are respectable people, and would not have a *Moslem* child for twice the money."

As soon as matins were ended, I waited on the Superior of the Armenian Convent, to pay my respects and to thank him for his hospitality. He was a fine-looking old man, with a very gracious, though somewhat patronizing air. "We are always most happy," he said, "to receive any friend of the Bishop of the English, and in future shall be happy to receive you on your own account." After taking my leave I offered the lay brother the usual gratuity expected at a convent, but he courteously declined it, even when I put it in the light of a charity for him to distribute among the poor.

After breakfast I took leave of the Bishop, with a lasting sense of gratitude and respect for him, and an increased interest in his mission.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### MAR SABA, THE DEAD SEA, AND THE VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.

Wild rose those hills by scorching suns embrowned,
And horrid crags by toppling convent crowned.
BYRON.

O'er the dark waters Moab's mount
Frowned with his gloomy forehead;
And sheathed his breast in granite rough,
Rent crag, and splinter horrid.
His helm of rock beat back the breeze,
Without a leaf to wreath it,
The vassal waves rolled in to kiss
His mailed foot beneath it.
GERALD GRIFFIN.

And Jordan! those sweet banks of thine,
And woods so full of nightingales.
MOORE.

I WAS obliged to return to Jerusalem for my baggage-horses and Bedouin. I found Sheikh Abdallah waiting for me, but he had left his horse and his arms without the walls. We all equipped ourselves as lightly as possible for the expedition, taking nothing but the tent and carpets, some coffee, maccaroni, cold

* A Moslem friar or hermit.

boiled rice, and preserved meats. This is the best supply a hurrying traveller can take with him; his meal is ready almost as soon as the fire is lighted, and it occupies but little space.

Issuing by the Zion gate from the city, we rode down into the Valley of Hinnom, where, under a cave that seemed to suit the character of the group, we found six wild-looking Bedouin awaiting us with Sheikh Abdallah's horse.

Their dress consisted of a light turban, a white frock with cross-belts of thick cord, and a pair of slippers. The Sheikh's dress was nearly the same; but he had a cloak of thick camel's hair-cloth, striped brown and white. The footmen had each a long musquet and a knife in his belt. The Sheikh carried his musquet slung at his back, a long spear in his hand, and a scimitar by his side.

The Arabs assisted their Chief to mount with considerable ceremony, and then professed themselves, according to Eastern custom, my most obedient slaves.

We mustered ten persons in all, including the seven Bedouin, the two servants, and myself. I rode forward alone, and a lonelier scene never echoed to a traveller's tread. When a turn in the road hid my own cavalcade from view, there was no longer a sign of life in all the dreary valley. The path lay through defiles of steep and lofty hills, pierced everywhere with caves and fissures that harboured only the jackal and the outlaw. The scenery became grander, gloomier, and sterner, as we approached Mar Saba; the dry bed of the brook Kedron ran winding through the most extraordinary fissure, which clove, not a rock, but a mountain, some ten or twelve miles in length. Its precipitous sides, at least 500 feet in height, presented the most curiously contorted strata in their jagged and vertical cliffs; and therein were innumerable caverns, where the Eremites of old lived under Hilarion's rule.

The Carismians slaughtered, it is said, 10,000 of those solitaries, whose bones were afterwards piously collected and buried beneath the convent-church of Mar Saba.

At length, after four hours' riding along dry, brown, and barren cliffs, on which no lizard glanced, or herbage grew, I came in sight of the magnificent and romantic monastery, that has stood in these savage solitudes for 1300 years.

It stands on the side of an almost precipitous ravine, and occupies the whole face of the cliff from base to summit; battlemented walls enclose it on every side, and a deep, dark, narrow glen yawns beneath it.

> It seemed a place where ghouls might come
> With their foul banquets from the tomb,
> And in its caverns feed unseen.

Beneath lies the bed of the brook Kedron, which turns away to the left, and runs into the Dead Sea through the mountains of Engedi.

It is to be remembered that this gloomy water is the only representative of that blessed element within many miles around; and even this seems blasted by the same curse that has scorched the country round into one vast cinder. The river-bed was as dry as the mountain top, and the convent obtains its sole supply of water from the last winter rains preserved in tanks.

The Bedouin unceremoniously led their horses in through a small postern gate off the road, which ran level with the highest part of the monastery, and my servants and I descended by a winding-path to the chief gate, where we knocked loud and long for admittance; we saw several monks sitting in a Kiosk above us, and we were reconnoitered through a small barred window in the gate. There were also several monks scattered over the cliffs, and gazing on the setting sun, whose last beams lighted up even those fearful chasms with something of a cheerful smile.

At length I was admitted, and somewhat coldly received, by a venerable-looking friar, who told me afterwards he had taken me for a Turk. As soon as it transpired that an Englishman had arrived, several monks came forward, and escorted me with hospitable welcomes through vaulted passages, terraces, and innumerable steps, to a very pretty little garden lying in a nook of the rocks. Off this was the "strangers' room," a spacious and handsome apartment, luxuriously carpeted, and surrounded with a soft divan.

An Albanian took away my boots, and an Athenian hung up my arms. Two Ionians approached hastily with trays of sweatmeats and cool water; and a fine old Russian padre lighted my pipe, and then offered a powerful cordial in a liqueur glass. Nothing could exceed the hospitality in which they seemed to vie with one another.

As yet, they ministered in silence, my languages being unknown to them; but, at length, an intelligent monk was produced in triumph who could speak Italian. The convent belonging to the Greek church, the monks understood for the most part nothing but Romaic and Russian; and an inhabitant of Joannina, who had served under Ali Pasha, was the only man out of forty, with the exception of the Superior, who could speak any but his native tongue.

When I was considered sufficiently rested, the Superior came to visit me, and, after a long conversation, deputed my Epirote friend to show me over the convent, as I proposed starting before daylight.

It was founded by St. Sabas in the sixth century, and has maintained its ground, they say, ever since. It is true the monks were occasionally massacred by the Saracens, Turks, and Carismians; but their martyrdom only gave fresh interest to the spot in the eyes of their successors.

The monastery has been lately repaired by the Greek convent at Jerusalem, of which it is a sort of chapel-of-ease. It contains about forty monks, who never taste meat, and have only salt fish three times a week. Their principal diet consists of bread, herbs, eggs, and oil.

They have a beautiful church here, which was dimly lighted by two silver lamps, kept ever burning before two pictures of the Saviour and the Virgin. Round the head of each figure is a glory-circle of gold and precious stones, on which the lamp's light falling produces a very peculiar effect. As we left the church, a bright moonlight was shining on the cliffs, and long flights of steps, and terraces, and gardens, so strangely intermingled in this convent; here and there, dark-robed figures were gliding silently about, or sitting on the cliffs enjoying the cool night-breeze.

The mountains that lay before us were those of Engedi, or Ain Jiddy, as it is pronounced, and it may have been in this convent that Sir Kenneth saw Edith and Berengaria, by the solitary's permission.

About nine o'clock, an old monk, with a large bunch of keys in his cord girdle, brought in a lamp and supper, which consisted of brown bread, eggs fried in oil, boiled rice, and very sour wine. My Albanian friend stood near me all the time of the repast, and said it was a pleasure to have a stranger to speak to. He had come recently from Mount Athos, the Monte Santo, as he called it, where he had passed twenty years of his life in a Greek convent. He said there were not less than 4,000 monks and Eremites on this mount.

After supper, I went out to stroll amongst the cliffs; and the scenery was certainly the wildest and strangest I had ever seen. The night was very beautiful; and it was past midnight when I flung myself on the soft divans that so unexpectedly wooed repose in this stern-looking convent.

The next morning, I was in the saddle before dawn, and wandering among the dreary but picturesque mountains towards the Dead Sea. Not a living thing met my eye for hours, except a few gazelles, after which I had a long but fruitless chase.

While the Bedouin and the baggage horse wound slowly along the path, I rode through many a wild pass and gloomy volcanic gorge; but wander where I might, I was ever kept in sight by the watchful Sheikh; his dark figure and thin grey horse seemed ever before me—he appeared to stand on every hill.

In about three hours, we reached the mountain brow looking down upon the Valley of the Jordan; and delightfully that beautiful strange scenery burst upon our weary and dazzled eyes.

Far from looking gloomy or curse-stricken, it was the most *riant* scene I had yet beheld in Palestine. The dread Lake itself was as brightly blue as those of Italy; the mountains of Moab and the Ammonites lifted their lofty line against the early sun, and wore a purple hue over their multiplied cliffs and promontories. Here and there, in the valley, were pale strips of desert, it is true; but generally the ground was covered with verdure or luxuriant shrubs, and winding groves of tamarisk and acacia showed where Jordan wandered, and occasionally betrayed his presence by a silvery gleam.

We rode down a steep and rugged path into the plain, and continued for some miles through thick jungle, alternating with deep sand, or rank luxuriant grass. At length we reached the shore of the dark mysterious sea, and encamped within a few yards of the water's edge. The Sheikh made many objections to the pitching of the tent lest it should be seen by the hostile tribes, and rode restlessly from hill to hill while I remained there.

Dr. Robinson, and several other authors, state that there is no island in the whole expanse of the Dead Sea. I do not know how they could receive such an impression, for there, straight before me, at the distance of perhaps a mile, lay an island, about three furlongs in length, very low, and apparently covered with ruins, or at least larger masses of stone than were visible anywhere in the neighbourhood. The shore was strewn with logs of wood and withered branches, that presented something of a petrified appearance, and lighted into a fire with great facility. They had, of course, been carried down the Jordan to the sea, and cast ashore in some storm.

There was no shell, or fly, or any sign of life along the curving strand, which ran steeply to the water's edge, and consisted of very small and angular pebbles. It was bordered by a line of white, thick, creamy foam, though there was scarcely a ripple on the lake, and several streaks of a similar appearance lay upon the green and purple waters far away. The eastern shore, on the left-hand side, was bold and precipitous, and wore a dark blue colour, under the slanting rays of the morning sunshine: to the west, the Judean hills rose almost equally abruptly from the sea, and appeared of a brown or

purple shade: to the south, the far shore was invisible, either from distance or an imperceptible mist brooding over the sea.

This sea is about fifty miles in length, and ten or twelve in breadth: it lies quite unknown, in the centre of the most interesting scenes in the world; and, if it were only a tradition that bespoke its origin, every appearance round would vindicate its truth.

The only boats that ever floated on its surface were brought thither by a Mr. Costigan and Mr. Moore. Mr. Costigan transported his upon camels from Acre to the Sea of Galilee, and thence floated down the Jordan to the Dead Sea. He was accompanied only by a Maltese servant, who, during his night watch, let out all the water from the cask, in the hope that he should have wine when it was gone. Mr. Costigan on the other hand, fearing that his servant would get drunk at such a critical period, had thrown the wine overboard, and when the sun arose in all his strength, there was not a drop of liquid to cool their burning lips but that of the bitter lake on which they floated. Mr. Costigan was seized with brain fever; his servant with difficulty pulled the boat to shore, and got assistance from Jericho (five miles off) to carry his master to Jerusalem. Here he died, in the Latin convent, and left no note of his discoveries behind him. Messrs. Moore and Beke brought a boat from Jaffa, which was soon after burned or sunk, I know not why.

It is said that, as in Lough Neagh, in Ireland—

"By the lake's dark edge, as the wanderer strays,
When the bright, clear eve's declining,
He sees the round towers of other days
In the wave beneath him shining;"

and, on the island to which I have alluded, columns and other ruins have been detected by powerful telescopes.

My servant and I endeavoured to swim thither, and found it very fatiguing, as the extreme density of the water threw the feet into the air at every stroke. Its temperature was delightful, and floating required no exertion; we could sit, stand, or even wade, in deep water, with a buoyancy that left no trouble to the bather. Nevertheless, the water was so acrid, that when a drop touched the inside lip, or eye, or nostril, it seemed to burn like vitriol. We swam for about half a mile, when a slight breeze coming on, raised rippling waves, which, as they broke over us, produced excruciating pain. We struggled on for a short time; but, the breeze freshening, we were obliged to return to the shore.

The Sheikh now urged a hasty departure, and we set out for the Jordan, at a brisk pace, over a deep sand, in which the horses sank up to their fetlocks, and which was covered with a salty incrustation, like hoar frost.

We had not proceeded far when the Sheikh halted, and placed his hand so as to shade his eyes; the loitering Bedouin stepped forward, and formed in a line before the luggage, keeping the step, and having their muskets crossed upon their breasts. I rode up to the Sheikh, and he pointed out to me the crimson and yellow kefiehs * of two Arabs, just over a small sand-hill; then he dashed forwards, and in a few moments we were by the side of the strangers.

They proved to belong to a friendly tribe, and were only engaged in collecting brimstone. They had been alarmed at our appearance, and were endeavouring to conceal themselves, when detected by the keen bright eye of our Sheikh.

Directing our course for the winding line of tamarisk and tall jungle, we came at length suddenly upon the Jordan, a rapid, muddy, treacherous-looking stream. The pilgrims profess to recognize the spot by which the Israelites entered the Land of Promise, and that where John baptised; but I saw no appearance of a ford. It was about sixty yards wide, overhung by thick shrubs and tangling weeds, and anything but tempting looking. I sank up to my knees in its tenacious mud, and with great difficulty extricated myself, endeavouring vainly to stem the rapid torrent by swimming.

The Sheikh was now urgent to depart, and we rode away through a small tract of desert, and then entered a wilderness of beautiful shrubs in fruit and flower. The tamarisk, laurustinus, mimosa, and willow, were the only trees I recognized. The underwood was very various, and quite unknown to me: one of the shrubs bore a small golden fruit about the size of a walnut, that hung temptingly on its bending branches; within, it was full of a black dust and a substance resembling cobweb. The Arabs called it "Bahr Lût limone"—*Lot's sea orange:* but this is not the true apple of Sodom, which I have seen elsewhere in the desert: that is much larger, very fragile, and is full of cindrous-looking grains and a silken fibre.

In the midst of this beautiful wilderness, where flowers in wild luxuriance tangled themselves into a shade for the soft, green grass, we came to the bright fountain of Ain Hajla, which well deserves the name of "The Diamond of the Desert." The costliest wine that ever sparkled over the thrilled palate of the epicure never gave such pleasure

* A thick silk handkerchief, tied over the head, like a hood, with a weft of camel's hair, the distinguishing head-dress of the Bedawee.

to his eager lip as the first draught of that cold, shining water to our parched mouths. Even the Bedouin forgot all fear of the hostile tribes, and we all flung ourselves down by the brink of the fountain, under the shade of the green willows, and drank, and bathed our hands and beards, and drank again, until the Sheikh's entreaties prevailed, and set us once more in motion.

There is a fine ruin of a Greek convent, named Kusr Hajla, about two miles distant from the pathway, which I cantered over to visit, and, as I emerged from its deserted courts, I found the Sheikh, as usual, close by my side. On asking the occasion of this strict watchfulness, he replied that he was responsible for my safety, that the old ruin was haunted by evil spirits, and sometimes by banditti.

About an hour afterwards, we came in sight of a Saracenic castle partly in ruins, though a tent upon the roof showed it was still inhabited. It was seated on a gentle eminence, planted over with acacia and fig-trees. Close by was a village of Arab huts, and this was Jericho!

My tent was pitched on a spot of green turf, close to a purling brook, that flowed from Elisha's Well. On my left was the old castle, called by pilgrims (who love to turn everything to good account,) the House of Zaccheus; to the right, under a thick grove, our horses were picketted, and the Bedouin were lying on the ground among them. The village of Riha (the name of Jericho is here unknown) lay behind—a collection of miserable mud cabins; and one solitary date-tree alone remained to vindicate the epithet applied in scriptures to the "City of the Palm." *

After several days of incessant and hurried travel, under the Midsummer power of a Syrian sun, it was a pleasant relaxation to lie down at leisure in the shadow of the tent, and gaze out upon the wonderful scenery before me. Thought can always wander free and far, but most of all, when in the intervals of bodily exertion, it goes forth busily, to keep up the excitement which has become essential to the traveller.

The valley I had just traversed from the Jordan was the Vale of Gilgal; to the southward lay the Dead Sea; to the north-east the Mountain of the Temptation.

The first is evidently fertile to exuberance; and, in the absence of more profitable employment, it gives birth to every variety of produce that is contented to grow wild. Were this vast valley inhabited by an industrious people, and the facilities for irrigation made use of, it might be one of the most productive in the world. The Sea of Galilee, about thirty miles distant, is elevated considerably above its level, and yet the abounding waters of the Jordan are at present wasted on the thankless corpse of the Dead Sea.

"This sea has no appearance of volcanic origin. It merely occupies part of the great valley, or *crevasse*, that runs from the Lebanon almost to the Gulf of Akabah." * This absence of volcanic agency renders still more remarkable the appearances of some fierce, fiery ordeal, through which it must have past.

We picked up several pieces of sulphur on the plain: there is a quantity of a dark stone, which, when broken, emits a smell of brimstone: the very core of the apples of Sodom is of so combustible a quality, that the Arabs use it as tinder for their matchlocks; and the Sea itself is a vast cauldron, in which the damned Cities of the Plain lie ever seething in salt brine, through which masses of bitumen rise bubbling to the simmering surface.

The range of the hills of Moab, that rises suddenly from the eastern edge of the Dead Sea, are about 2,000 feet in height; that of the Judean side opposite, about 1,500. The Sea itself lies 500 feet below the level of the Mediterranean; it has no exit, except by means of evaporation, and varies in its level some ten or twelve feet, according to the nearness or the distance of the rainy season.

One or two spots are inhabited, such as Ain Jiddy, or Engedi, where fresh water flows from fountains; but, generally speaking, it is as lonely as the grave. The remains of the town of Zoar are still visible on the Eastern hills, where the race of Moab sprang from the daughters of Lot.

It seems that there are whole tracts of hills composed of fossil salt to the south-east of this extraordinary lake; and they say that, when the riven soil gaped into fissures with the heat of the conflagration, a mass of this salt was revealed to Lot, who took it for his missing wife.

The Arabs call the lake the "Bahr el Lût," or *Sea of Lot;* they maintain, and their assertion has been repeated by European observers, that in certain states of the waters of this Sea, and of the atmosphere, the Cities of the Plain may be seen just peering over the water's edge.

Messrs. Moore and Beke, who attempted to explore the Dead Sea in 1837, found no bottom with 300 fathoms of line, but their investigations were unfortunately soon interrupted

* The Palm formerly abounded in Palestine; it is now very scarce. In Vespasian coins, Judea is typified by a disconsolate woman seated under a Palm.

* Von Buch's Letter to Dr. Robinson.

and Mr. Costigan, the only other person, as I have before mentioned, who succeeded in launching a boat upon these waters, has left no trace of his discoveries.

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Towards evening, I strolled into the courtyard of the old castle, where a Turkish garrison is quartered, to protect the pilgrims, and check the inroads of the Bedouin from beyond the Jordan.

There was a marble fountain and reservoir of water here, at which the village girls were filling their jars. A range of stables occupied one side of the courtyard, and a shade of trellised vines hung over another. Beneath this, the Aga was sitting on his carpet with two or three of his officers, whilst others moved about in their wild, martial garb, with pistol in belt, and sword by side, as if expecting momentarily the trumpet's call.

Such a scene unchanged might that old Crusader-castle have witnessed six hundred years ago, when the Crescent had just displaced the Cross; and its fierce soldiery then, as now, were lounging about, or burnishing their arms beneath the shade of the forbidden vine.

I did not visit the Aga, being rather tired of governors, and pipes, and coffee, and common-places about England and fine brandy; I presume he was equally tired of Europeans, for he did not invade my solitude, or vouchsafe me any notice.

At night, the aspect of my bivouac was very picturesque; the watch-fire, blazing among the dark, green shrubs, gleamed now upon the water, now upon the gay caparisons of the horses that remained standing and saddled all night. The Arabs slept round my tent, wrapped in their striped bernouses: nightingales were thrilling the dark groves with their song; and from the top of the tower came sounds of music and laughter, where the ladies of the Aga's hareem were enjoying the moonshine and the cool air of night. The ladies of Jericho are said to be very fond of strangers' society, but St. Senanus might have been contented with the distant carriage they assumed in our case.

About three in the morning, I roused my sleeping people, who sprung to their feet with alacrity. In a few minutes, a little fire was made with dried leaves and twigs, ignited by tinder and a pistol-flash. Then the coffee steamed and bubbled; and this, with a roll of bread, constituted our morning's repast. We seldom tasted any other till sunset; but a cup of coffee always presented itself when we halted for half-an-hour throughout the day.

The good-humoured Bedouin vied with each other in loading the horses, and gratefully received a thimbleful of coffee as reward. We were in motion while the moon still threw our shadows Eastward.

I passed through some glades and groves of great beauty on my way to the adjoining mountains, but could detect no traces of where Jericho once stood, with her temples, palaces, and theatres. A curious mound, and a large tank-like excavation, were the only disturbance of Nature's order of things that I observed.

At the approach of morning, the stir of life that seemed, like leaven, to ferment the surface of the world round, was very striking; first, the partridge's call joined chorus with the nightingale, and soon after their dusky forms were seen darting through the bushes, and then bird after bird joined the chorus; the lizards began to glance upon the rocks, the insects on the ground and in the air; the jerboa* peeping from its burrow, fish glancing in the stream, hares bounding over the dewy grass, and, as more light came, the airy form of the gazelle could be seen on almost every neighbouring hill.

Then came sunrise, first flushing the light clouds above, then flashing over the Arabian mountains, and pouring down into the rich valley of the Jordan. The Dead Sea itself seemed to come to life under that blessed spell, and shone like molten gold among its purpled hills.

I lingered long upon that mountain's brow, and thought that, so far from deserving all the dismal epithets that have been bestowed upon it, I had not seen so cheerful or attractive a scene in Palestine. That luxuriant valley was beautiful as one great pleasure-ground; with bosks and groves of aromatic shrubs, intermingled with sloping glades and verdant valleys: the City of Palms might still be hidden under that forest whence the old castle just shows its battlements. The plains of Gilgal might still be full of prosperous people, with cottages concealed under that abundant shade; and the dread sea itself shines and sparkles as if its waters rolled in pure and refreshing waves "o'er coral rocks and amber beds" alone.

The road from hence to Jerusalem is drear and barren, and nothing but Bethany occurred to divert my thoughts from dwelling on the beautiful Dead Sea.

* A pretty little animal, something between a rat and a rabbit, in appearance and habits.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE ARAB AND HIS HORSE.

And he will be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. —*Gen.* xvi. 12.

Gli Arabi avari,
Ladroni in ogni tempo, mercenari.
TASSO.

With a champing bit, and an arching crest,
And an eye like a listening deer,
And a spirit of fire that pines at rest,
And limbs that mock at fear:
Fit slave for a lord whom all else refuse
To serve at his desperate need;
By my troth, I think one whom the world pursues
Has a right to a gallant steed.
BULWER LYTTON.

THE Arab is the hero of romantic history; little is known of him but by glimpses; he sets statistics at defiance, and the political economist has no share in him.

Since Abraham drove forth Hagar to the desert, he has clung to the barren inheritance of his forefathers with a fierce fidelity. While his brother the Jew has tasted the luxury and the bitterness of all nations and triumphed and been trampled on in turn, the Ishmaelite has gone down to his desert grave, generation after generation, unchanging and unsubdued.

It is of the Bedawee Arab, or of the Bedouin, as they are called in the plural, that I speak more especially. The dwellers in cities soon become corrupt, and lose the characteristics of their race.

Who knows where the Arab dwells, or who has marked out the boundaries of his people? We are told that Arabia is enclosed by the Euphrates, Ormuz, and the Persian Gulf; by Diarbekir, Irak, and Khuzestan; but that renders it scarcely less vague.

The Bedawee roams as freely over his boundless deserts as the winds that sweep them; the only barriers he knows are civilization, and its settled habitations. Tribes sunder and join, as pastures become scarce or abundant; an oasis is to-day peopled with thousands, and covered with flocks and herds; to-morrow it is lonely as the sea.

And thus it has been with the Arab for three thousand years.

The Arab is so reverential towards antiquity of descent, that he sacrifices his own pride of birth to the abstract principle. He admits that he is but a parvenu, as only claiming origin from Ishmael, and calls himself "El Arab el Mostareba"—*the naturalized Arab.* The genuine ancient tribes are characterized as "El Arab"—*par excellence*, and were denominated *Ad*, *Thamud*, *Tasm*, and *Amalek.*

*Zarab*, the grandson of Eber, the great grandson of Shem, gave his name to Yemen, over which country he was king; and his posterity continued to rule there until conquered and expelled by Ishmael. He married the daughter of Modad, one of the native princes; and his son Kedar obtained peaceable possession of the throne.

After the expulsion, however, of the ancient dynasty, the kingly spirit seems gradually to have given way to the patriarchal rule which the invaders had introduced; and the system of independent tribes soon universally prevailed. At Mecca the management of affairs appears to have been vested in an aristocracy of the tribe of Koreish, who strengthened their authority by the prestige attendant on their being "the Guardians of the Caaba."

Lady H. Stanhope gives the following account of the early Arabs in a letter to Sir Gore Ouseley, dated from Djouni, in 1837: —"The Bedouin Arabs may be divided into two distinct classes, original Arabs, and the descendants of Ishmael, whose daughter married the ninth descendant of the great Katān, out of which germ sprang the famous tribe of the Koreish, which are a mixture of Jewish blood. One of the most famous tribes was that of the Beni Hashenig, from which sprung the Bosnāk, and the Beni Omeyn, the ancestors of the Irish, always famous for the beauty of their women."*

Under the name of Saracen their history becomes too voluminous to follow. This name has been absurdly derived from their implacable stepmother Sarah, and also from the great desert, the Sahara; it was an epithet of one of their most distinguished tribes, and adopted by the rest.

During the stirring times of the Crusades the name of Saracen was almost exclusively applied to the Arab; and with that name are connected some of the brightest associations that shine over war's dark annals in elder times.

Chivalry was an earnest, solemn, absorbing feeling—almost a religion in itself. Its kin-

* I subjoin the following passage from the same letter as curious:—"Gibraltar probably took its name from the great chief Gibailer Alta, and the monkeys remaining on the mountain seem to indicate that they are confined to certain districts by talismanic art, well known among the Koreish, but ill understood in these days. . . . . All the ancient Irish and Scotch families still retain proofs of Arab descent in name as well as in personal characteristics. The Duke of Leinster's motto, "Croom Aboo"—*his father's vineyards*—has a grand signification, alluding to the most learned of works, of which only two copies exist. . . . The name of O'Brien is, in Arabic, Obeyan or Abeyan, which famous race may perhaps take its name from its master."

*New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1844.

dred spirit influenced the hostile armaments of mail-clad Europe, and of the turbaned East; those who held a different faith, different prejudices, principles, and hopes, held nevertheless the same chivalric faith in common.

It is a curious subject of contemplation to glance at Europe, when first the universal heart of her people took up that great enthusiasm of the crusades; grey-haired warrior, youth, and maiden, were alike possessed by its spirit: and she who kept a patient widowhood, and truehearted constancy in her lonely castle, laid as rich an offering on the sacred shrine, as those who freely gave their heart's blood for the cause of Palestine.

The Saracen was as deeply possessed by this spirit as he who bore the red cross on his shoulder, except in the reverence, or rather idolatry, of woman, that was professed by the latter. It was an exaggerative age, and every one seemed to think with spectacles, as it were; hence, perhaps, it came that such great results and sustained energies were produced by and exercised upon such comparatively trifling objects.

Far beyond life was the value of conquest to him who led the battle of these romantic times; but far more precious than even this was the individual knightly character. Who has not heard of Saladin, when he saw the lion-hearted king dismounted, sending his own horse to carry him? "for," said he, "it is not meet that such a *knight* should fight on foot."

And when the same Saracen chieftain* heard that the climate of his country was about to accomplish what all her chivalry had failed to do, and that the British monarch lay at the point of death, he sent his own physician to restore health to his terrible opponent. Fearlessly, too, and undoubtingly, did Richard drink the potion administered by his enemy's emissary.

These traits show as plainly as a thousand the single-minded honour of the age. No doubt the Saracen abhorred the Christian's cause, but at the same time he could reverence his high devoted daring, and indomitable battling for his faith. The heroism of these times has been sung by the troubadour, and its spirit even caught by the cold historian, yet we only know of the Saracen chivalry through its enemies, and its results. The Arabic authors seem to feel shame for their heroes when they showed mercy towards the foes of El Islam: and the songs of Antar, though love and valour is their theme, show little chivalry. Among the Rajpoots we may perhaps still find the light of Oriental chivalry, while some sparkles of it glimmer occasionally, even through the character of the wandering Arab, to whom we now return.

The real Bedawee has little of historical interest: it is only when he has gone forth as a conqueror, that his annals assume a consistent or interesting form. His whole history when at home may be comprised in the fact, that he is to-day as he was in the days of Ishmael, unconquered and indomitable.

Those of his race who approach the settled habitations endeavour to preserve as much as possible the character of their desert brethren; and though means of subsistence may compel them occasionally to enter a town, they always do so with reluctance, and leave it like men escaping from captivity.

The Fellaheen of Egypt are degenerate Arabs, who have lost almost all the characteristics of their race, except its vices; but along the bordering deserts the Bedawee is still found genuine even there.

At the time of the contest between the Mameluke Beys, the temptation of war gathered several of the tribes to the standard of each of the contending parties, and they encamped in the neighbourhood of Cairo.

I give the following anecdote as illustrative of the principles that regulate the conduct of these wild people. It was related to me by an Englishman of high character, who was in Egypt at the time that the circumstances occurred.

In 1804 Osman Bardissy was the most influential of the Mameluke Beys, and virtually governed Egypt. Mehemet Ali, then rising into power, succeeded in embroiling this powerful old chief with Elfy Bey, another of the Mamelukes. The latter escaped to England, where he was favourably received, and promised assistance by our government against Osman, who was in the French interests.

At this time a Sheikh of Bedouin stood high in Osman's confidence, and brought him intelligence that Elfy had landed at Alexandria. "Go, then," said the old Bey, "surprise his boat, and slay him on his way up the river; his spoil shall be your reward." The Sheikh lay in wait upon the banks of the Delta, and slew all the companions of the rival Bey: Elfy himself escaped in the darkness, and made his way to an Arab encampment before sunrise. Going straight to the Sheikh's tent, which is known by a spear standing in front of it, he entered, and hastily devoured some bread that he found there. The Sheikh was absent, but his wife exclaimed on seeing the fugitive, "I know you, Elfy Bey, and my husband's life, perhaps, at this moment depends upon his taking yours.

*He never allowed himself to be called "Sultan," not being of the blood of the Prophet.

Rest now and refresh yourself, then take the best horse you can find, and fly. The moment you are out of our horizon, and the sun is above it, the tribe will be in pursuit of you." The Bey escaped to the Thebaid, and the disappointed Sheikh presented himself to his employer. Osman passionately demanded of him if it was true that his wife had saved the life of his deadliest enemy, when in her power. "Most true, praised be Allah!" replied the Sheikh, drawing himself proudly up, and presenting a jewel-hilted dagger to the old Bey; "this weapon," he continued, "was your gift to me in the hour of your favour; had I met Elfy Bey, it should have freed you from your enemy. Had my wife betrayed the hospitality of the tent, it should have drank her blood; now you may use it against myself," he added, as he flung it at the Mameluke's feet.

This reverence for hospitality is one of the wild virtues that has survived from the days of the patriarchs, and is singularly contrasted, yet interwoven with other and apparently opposite tendencies. The Arab will rob you, if he is able; he will even murder you, if it suits his purpose; but, once under the shelter of his tribe's black tents, or having eaten of his salt by the way-side, you have as much safety in his company as his heart's blood can purchase for you.

The Bedouin are extortionate to strangers, dishonest to each other, and reckless of human life. On the other hand, they are faithful to their trust, brave after their fashion, temperate, and patient of hardship and privation beyond belief.

Their sense of right and wrong is not founded on the Decalogue, as may be well imagined; yet from such principles as they profess they rarely swerve. Though they will freely risk their lives to steal, they will never contravene the wild rule of the desert. If a wayfarer's camel sinks and dies beneath its burden, the owner draws a circle round the animal in the sand, and follows the caravan. No Arab will presume to touch that lading, however tempting. Dr. Robinson mentions that he saw a tent hanging from a tree near mount Sinai, which his Arabs said had then been there a twelvemonth, and never would be touched until its owner returned in search of it.

The Bedawee woman is far more free than her Egyptian relative, and far more virtuous. They do not cover their faces, and are not afraid to receive a stranger with courtesy and kindness. They live much in the open air, manufacturing cloth from camel's hair, milking their flocks, attending to the slight agriculture that their mode of life requires, and carefully tending their children. Their husbands seek a livelihood by attending or supplying caravans with camels, or by other less conventional dealings with travellers.

There is something very romantic in their mode of life, which never seems to lose its zest. Their love of the desert amounts to a passion, and every one who has wandered with these wild sons of freedom where all else are slaves, can understand the feeling. It is not to be imagined that in this desert there is only barren sand and naked rock; far different is the aspect that the places of the picturesque encampments present. Small flowering shrubs and fragrant thickets diversify wide savannahs, on which dry, sunburnt grass only serves as shelter for soft and tender herbage. There the wild boar and the gazelle abound, and the partridge makes merry in his security. Wild tracts of desert intervene, it is true, between these isles of verdure; and, when they are to be crossed, preparations, like those for the sailing of a fleet, are made for these "ships of the desert." Fearlessly they steer their way over these trackless wilds, by the stars at night, and the sun by day. And when they have reached the spot for which they have traversed the desert in the faith perhaps only of some tradition that spoke of verdure there, the Sheikh strikes his ostrich-tufted spear in the ground. Down kneel the camels; women, children, and luggage tumble off; soon the tents of the tribe start up in a circle, or in the form of a crescent round the Sheikh's; fires are lighted, bread is baking, and the Arab is as much at home as if he had been there for a generation.

The Sheikh's tent is larger than the rest, and is always pitched with the door in the direction whence strangers are likely to arrive.

For a few days or weeks, perhaps even for a season, they remain in such encampment, driving their flocks each night into the enclosure, and perhaps foraging among the neighbouring tribes. Sometimes a caravan is to be attacked, and then the men assemble in many thousands.

When the pasture or the spring is exhausted, or when danger threatens, they are in motion at an hour's notice from their Sheikh. His spear is the last thing taken from the ground; the horsemen and armed warriors, on dromedaries, march in front; then come the flocks and herds; the she-camels carrying the women and children succeed in order, while their young gambol and browse by their sides as they proceed: finally, come the strong camels, laden with the tents and other baggage of the tribe.

Lady H. Stanhope gives the following interesting account of her experience of Bedouin life:—"I went with the great chief, Mahanna el Fadel (who commands 40,000

men), into the desert for a week, and marched with their encampment. I was treated with the greatest respect and hospitality, and it was altogether the most curious sight I ever witnessed. Horses and mares fed upon camel's milk, Arabs living upon little else, except rice and a sort of bread: the space around me covered with living things; 12,000 camels coming to water from one tribe only: the old poets from the banks of the Euphrates singing the praises and the feats of ancient heroes; children quite naked; women with lips dyed light blue, and their nails red, and their hands all over flowers and designs of different kinds. A chief who is obeyed like a great king — starvation and pride most strangely mixed."*

Some of these tribes contain 100,000 people; but these are only concentrated from the various regions over which they wander, in cases of great emergency. They are divided into numerous smaller sections, each of which has its Sheikh, who owns no obedience to any living man but the Sheikh of the whole tribe.

His rule is strictly patriarchal; he has no power even to decide disputes, for which purpose a Cadi is appointed. On occasions of emergency, he may indeed put a man to death, but this power is shared almost in an equal degree by the person who is injured. The Sheikh chooses the place of encampment; but this may be objected to, and instances are not rare of the Sheikh being deposed, and another elected in his place. The Sheikhdom is, however, hereditary in most cases, and some are of very ancient descent. Abdallah was Sheikh of a detachment from the great tribe of the Tammirah, of which the Khatib who accompanied Dr. Robinson is supreme Sheikh. It is impossible to make even an approximation to the number of the Bedouin; between their ignorance and their love of exaggeration, truth has no chance of fair play among themselves, and they are obliged to render an account to none. The great tribe of the Ænese, inhabiting the desert east of Damascus, are said to amount to 170,000 souls, and there are about fifty tribes whose names are known, of those who border upon Syria.

Nothwithstanding their boasted independence, Mehemet Ali's vigilant and stern power made itself felt wherever his name was known in Syria. Under the contemptible government of the Porte, however, the tribes have shaken off all the salutary awe which the Pasha had inspired, and, as I learn from a recent letter from Jerusalem, they now approach the very walls of the Holy City with impunity.

* *New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1843.

Literature they have none, but they nourish their romantic imaginations by oral tales, and poems running down from very ancient times. The desert is full of superstitions, many of which are very poetical; and these help to keep alive the Moslem faith, with which they are ingeniously interwoven.

At daybreak, the Sheikh shouts the muezzin call to prayer from the door of his tent; and it is a striking and solemn sight to witness that devout congregation; every man kneeling at the door of his tent, and prostrating himself in the dust with his face towards Mecca.

The wealth of the Arab consists in flocks and herds; but his pride and power lies in his HORSE.

These are noble animals, and are no less remarkable for their chivalrous disposition than for their strength and endurance: gallant, yet docile; fiery, yet gentle; full of mettle, yet patient as a camel. They are very ferocious to each other, but suffer little children to pull about and play with them.

Their beauty is not remarkable, at least to an English eye. They seldom exceed fourteen and a half, or at most fifteen, hands in height; they have not good barrels, their chest is narrow, the pastern too much bent, and their quarters are seldom well turned. I only speak of these as defects in what would be considered symmetry in Europe; experience has proved to me that they argue no defect in Asia. The head is beautiful: the expansive forehead, the brilliant, prominent eye, and the delicately-shaped ear, would testify to nobleness in any animal; the high withers, and the shoulder well thrown back; the fine, clean limbs, with their bunches of starting muscle; and the silken skin beneath which all the veins are visible, show proofs of blood that never can deceive.

The choicest horses come from the remoter parts of the desert, and cannot be said to have a price, as nothing but the direst necessity will induce their owners to part with them. There are three great classes recognized: the Kochlani, the Kadischi, and the Atteschi. The first are said to derive their blood from Solomon's stables, the second are of a mixed race, and the third have no claim to gentle breeding.

The Kochlani are, as may be supposed, extremely scarce, but a great deal of their blood is distributed among the nameless breeds; and I never saw an exception to docility, high spirit, and endurance, even among the hacks of Beyrout and Jerusalem. A friend of mine rode his horse from Cairo to Suez, eighty-five miles, in twelve hours, and, resting for twelve more, returned within the following twelve; during these journeys,

the horse had no refreshment, except a gulp of water once to cool the bit. I have been on the same horse for twenty-four hours on one occasion, and for upwards of thirty on another, without any rest or refreshment, except once, for half an hour, when a few handfuls of barley were the only food. In both these instances, the horses never tasted water throughout their journeys.

Some of my young naval friends used to ride the same horse at a gallop almost the whole distance to Djoun and back, about sixty miles, over roads that would appear impossible to an English horse to climb. I only mention these instances as of daily occurrence. The horse of the true Nedjed breed will gallop, they say, one hundred and twenty miles without a thick breath.

Nedjed is a mountainous country in the Hedjaz, not far from Mecca, which possesses the horse in the most perfect form known. The pedigrees of these animals are sometimes worn round their necks, but on such I should be inclined to look with suspicion. In the more remote regions of the desert, where alone the pure blood is to be found, writing is unknown. Oral pedigrees, well borne out by the hieroglyphics of noble blood that may be read in the outward structure, so eloquent of the power within—these are the pedigrees most to be relied on.

The mare is far more valued than the horse, as the Bedouin believe that the mother gives character to the race, and deduce the descent of the horse through the female line. The mare is also supposed capable of enduring greater fatigue, and requiring less sustenance.

In all the Arab tales, the horse figures largely in connexion with the human heroes. Thus, Achmed was accounted the most generous man of his time, and it is said that he could refuse nothing to the veriest stranger, except a celebrated horse, which shared his tent and his bread. The Sultan, hearing such report of this generosity, sent one of his officers in disguise to test its truth.

Arrived at Achmed's encampment, the stranger was received with all hospitality; and although it was said that the Arab chieftain had become impoverished, a splendid banquet of horse-flesh was served up. The next morning, as the guest was departing, his host inquired if there were any means by which he could compensate him for the honour he had conferred upon his tent by accepting its hospitality. "Alas!" said the stranger, "I have but one request, and that I shrink from asking: my wife is ill; she sickens with desire to possess that noble horse, of which all Damascus has heard so much." "Wretched man that I am!" exclaimed the Arab, "I had nothing else to regale you with last night, and I slew him for your repast."

A French officer, who was ambassador to a Syrian Pasha, observed a very beautiful horse, ridden by a Bedouin, and offered a large sum of money to its poor proprietor: his offer was refused, and the Pasha sent to the Arab to say that the horse must be given to the Frank, his friend. With tears in his eyes, the poor man dismounted from his loved companion, and kissed him on the forehead: then, suddenly exclaiming, "Thou hast been the friend of the free, thou shalt never be the servant of the slave!" he shot him dead.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### THE JEW.

The Hebrew nation is one great prophecy.
ST. AUGUSTINE.

But we must wander witheringly
In other lands to die,
And where our father's ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left one stone,
And mockery sits on Salem's throne.
BYRON.

"WHEREVER we have a Jew on the surface of the earth, there we have a man whose testimony and whose conduct connect the present with the beginning of all time." * In whatever point of view this chosen race is considered, it is by far the most remarkable of all those that inhabit the earth. Their *completeness*, and wonderfully preserved individuality; their unequalled persecutions; their undying hope, and their proud confidence that they shall yet be a great people—all these are characteristics peculiar to themselves.

They are scattered over every region of earth's wide surface, yet not only their physical but their moral traits are unchanged from the days in which their nation gathered round the Temple.† Living illustrations of prophecy as they are, they refuse to believe in those which are fulfilled even in themselves, while they cling eagerly to those that yet continue in suspense. They have had their temple twice, their city six times, destroyed, yet they are as confident in their restoration, as that the morrow's sun will rise.

Prophecy speaks boldly and unambiguously upon this theme: "for the Lord will yet have mercy upon Jacob, and yet will choose Israel, and set them in their own land." In the

* Bishop Watson.

† "'I am the Lord—I change not, therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.'—*Mal.* iii. 6. If this was a marvel when Malachi prophecied, how much more is it a wonder now?"—*Alexander.*

tenth chapter of Ezekiel, God declares plainly that He will take the Ten tribes, and the Two tribes, and unite them in His hand: that He will gather together the children of Israel from among the heathen on every side, and bring them into their land, and will make them a nation on the mountains of Israel.

The place where the Ten tribes have lain concealed for 2,500 years is still a mere matter of conjecture. Now we hear of them along the shores of the Caspian Sea; then among the American Indians; now among the warriors of Cochin,* and the fierce tribes of Affghanistan.

It has been affirmed that numbers of these lost tribes appeared in Jerusalem in the days of Augustus Cæsar, and thus incurred the responsibility of hearing the Messiah's voice, and of rejecting Him as their Saviour and their King.†

Wherever the lost tribes may dwell, or whenever they may return to Jerusalem, they are to be preceded by the tribes of Judah.‡ And surely when their summons is heard and answered by this widely scattered people, it will resemble that great and varied picture of the resurrection: with turbaned brow and floating robe; with lofty cap and arctic furs, with forehead pale as the Siberian snows, or dark as the Egyptian soil from whence they come.

There are perhaps fewer Jews in Palestine than in most countries in Europe. There is no rural Hebrew population there, though they have acquired both wealth and influence in Acre and Damascus. Their number in the whole of Syria does not probably exceed 30,000 souls: and they say their number on the whole earth is not above 6,000,000.

They are very zealous students of the Prophecies, and ingeniously distribute, between Solomon and other heroes of their race, the promises with regard to Shiloh that are absolutely fulfilled. Their hope of the Messiah is as strong as ever, and, in their prayers for the day of atonement, they have the exclamation, "Woe unto us, for we have no mediator!"

The Moslem hates the Jew above all other nations, following up Mahomet's quarrel with them when they refused to hearken to his voice, or accept his flattering invitation. There are *only* seven degrees of eternal punishment in the Moslem's future world, and the sixth is appropriated exclusively to the reception of the Hebrew race: the hypocrite occupies the seventh, the opprobrium of which is not complete in that it is the lowest, but in that it is below the Jew.

Nevertheless, the universal tolerance that is gaining ground in the East has enfranchised the Jew from all the legal, and from many of the social, disqualifications to which he has so long been subjected. It is true, that in the recent accusations at Damascus, public resentment ran high against this people, but appearances were strongly against them; even civilized Europe, so lately as 1820, heard the old cry, Hep, Hep!* raised in Wartzburgh and Copenhagen, to which many perished.

Hamburgh contains so many of this people that it has been called the lesser Jerusalem, but Poland is the country wherein they mostly abound. Here they have stately synagogues, richly endowed colleges, and courts of Judicature, even for criminal cases.

In Hungary, the revenues were farmed by them, until Ferdinand the Second published an edict forbidding their employment. In that country took place, in the year 1650, a most extraordinary assembly, convened to decide whether the Messiah was come or not. Three hundred Rabbis and an immense multitude of Jews assembled in the Plain of Ageda. Some of the Rabbis expressed a wish to hear the Protestant divines upon the subject, and two Roman Catholic priests proposed to preach on their own account. Then rose a stormy cry as of old in Jerusalem, "We will have no Christ, no man-God, no virgin," and they tore their hair, and rent their garments. A majority of voices decided that the Messiah was not yet come, and that his advent was delayed by the sins and impenitence of the people.

Not only in civilized Europe, but even in their own promised land, the Jews can now find rest. It appears strange that not more "of the wandering foot and weary breast" seek refuge here, where all seems free to them. Once under the protection of a European power, property is here secure; and no where in the world perhaps would

* There are two races of Jews settled along the coast of Malabar: the *black* and the *white*, as they are called. The former is the oldest, and is supposed to have wandered thus far East long before the destruction of Jerusalem: the latter, according to their own tradition, settled there soon after that catastrophe, and obtained various privileges from the native princes. They never were an independent nation; like the Christians of the neighbouring mountains, (said to be converts of St. Thomas) they had their own rulers, although they were tributary to the protecting states. Benjamin of Tudela speaks of a powerful tribe of Jews in the twelfth century, as living in the "Mountains of Nisbor, whence flows the river Gozen. They make warre upon the children of Chus, and travell in warfare through the desarts." — *Lord Lindsay, Buchanan's Christian Researches and Travels in Hindostan; Purchas's Pilgrims*, ii., 2, 1457.

† Jahn. ‡ Zechariah xii. 7.

* H-ierosolyma. E-st. P-erdita.—A persecution anagram.

capital meet with a richer return than in Palestine. But all its prospects are agricultural; and the Jew has so long been accustomed to wander about the streets of the cities of the Gentiles, that he no longer desires "to sit under the shade of his own fig-tree, or to eat of his own vine."

Notwithstanding that the Jew is at once the object and the guardian of prophecy; the recipient, and the illustration of Scripture's promises and threats; there is perhaps no religious body that is so little spiritual in its worship. Their pride, their trust, their hope, linger about the Land of Promise, above which it never seems to soar; or to rise, even now, beyond the temporalities for which they abandoned Him who declared that his kingdom was not of this world.

It seems little probable that the Israelites in the wilderness held the hope of immortality that is now almost disrespectfully familiar to our minds: it is true that in Job, the Prophets, and the Psalms, we have occasional intimations of such a hope, but the emigrants from Egypt had none of these.* The joys of Heaven never appeared as a Mosaic doctrine, or even as a reward for righteousness; the Pentateuch does not refer to it; and it seems improbable that a leading article of belief would have been only darkly shadowed out in a Scripture intended as a rule of faith.

Moreover, long afterwards, we find the Sadducees only considered as Dissenters, not as unbelievers in the Scriptures. When Zaduch, with his colleague, Bythos, introduced a schism among the adherents of the Oral Law, Maimonides only speaks of them as having put a new construction on some of the articles of Hebrew faith.

Perhaps some explanation of this may be found in the probability that, until Christ's coming, salvation was too deep a mystery for the people: instead of that faith which is required of us, they had only to believe in God, and the fulfilment of his promise in giving them the Land of his Promise. As in Paradise, an apple was the test of faithfulness, may not Canaan have been that apple to the Hebrews, and the city of Zion an unrevealed type of the New Jerusalem.†

These matters are far too deep for me, and for this book; I only allude to them here as mere questions of literature. Certain it is, however, that the Jew's worship, with all its abhorrence of idolatry, seems to be of a rather material nature.

The Caraites are said to be a pure remnant of the Hebrews, and to be set apart as a specimen of what the Israelite was, and may become again. They abide scrupulously by the written law, rejecting the Talmud and Rabbinical explanations. There are many of this sect in Lithuania, and Wolff found 5,000 of them at Bagdad who were distinguished for veracity, and called the children of The Book: they are also found in the Crimea, where their character stands very high; they all understand Hebrew, and even speak it as a household language.

In Jerusalem, the Hebrews are divided into two great sects, as much at rivalry with each other, as are the Greek and Latin Churches. These follow generally the national distinctions of the Polish and the German Jew. The same zeal for their ancient worship seems to actuate both, and their common talk is of their faith, while they cultivate anxiously the language of their forefathers. Frequently you meet small parties of Jews in the environs of the Holy City, and almost always, I am told, their conversation is about prophecy.

Two Rabbis, approaching Jerusalem, observed a fox running upon the Hill of Zion, and Rabbi Joshua wept, but Rabbi Eliezer laughed: "Wherefore dost thou laugh?" said he who wept. "Nay, wherefore dost thou weep?" demanded Eliezer. "I weep," replied the Rabbi Joshua, "because I see what is written in the Lamentations fulfilled; because of the Mount of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it." "And, therefore," said Rabbi Eliezer, "do I laugh; for when I see with mine own eyes that God has fulfilled his threatenings to the very letter, I have thereby a pledge that not one of His *promises* shall fail, for He is ever more ready to show mercy than judgment."

In speaking of Abyssinia, I have mentioned that its people are very much possessed in favour of the Jews; and, in speaking of the Arabs, I should perhaps have mentioned the Rechabites, or Midianites, supposed to be descendants of Jethro. This people, if they cannot be called Jews themselves, are very zealous for them, and profess their faith; they understand Hebrew, though their common language is the same as that of the other Arabs, by whom they are surrounded; they possess the Pentateuch, Isaiah, Kings, Samuel, and the lesser prophets; they amount to about 60,000 in number, dwell in tents, and "neither sow nor plant vineyards." They inhabit the fertile Oases, whence they issue forth to levy contributions on Moslem travellers. Should a caravan approach their haunts, a horseman of their tribe suddenly presents himself, and demands tribute. Whether refused or not, he disappears as suddenly as he came; but, in the former case, he returns with a storm of cavalry: in the latter, with a scribe, who writes a passport, and gives a receipt for the

* Unless indeed Moses composed the Book of Job, as an allegory, among the scenes that it describes.

† Hebrews iv. 8, 23.

tribute-money. Mahomet defeated this tribe in several engagements, but made no converts among them. One of his Rechabite captives was so beautiful a girl that he proposed to marry her; but it is said that dreading a worse fate, or emulous of the fame of Jael, who was of this heroic tribe, the captive girl poisoned her inspired lover.

"The Jews are spoken of in Revelations * as the 'Kings of the East:' if, indeed, the Affghans be of the Ten Tribes, this title may not be deemed too lofty for a nation which has held the thrones of Persia and Hindostan." Seldom, however, any well authenticated Jews are found in the countries eastward of Palestine, though Morison speaks of having found some ancient families of them in China.

The Jews seem to take no root in Palestine; their children are very few and unhealthy; they themselves follow no business, and seem to consider Jerusalem merely as an inn. They are altogether unconnected with the agriculture of the country, and there is no business or commerce in the city with which they could involve themselves.

Although Jews are continually arriving to lay their bones in the ancestral sepulchres, their number is not at present on the increase. Riding one day in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the progress of the party was arrested by a Jewish caravan, weary, wasted, and overpowered with fatigue and poverty. They had no eyes but for the City, whose towers rose before them in the distance; while their hearts wandered over it, their feet stood still; the fathers held up their little children to gaze upon that shrine of Israel's faith, and tears flowed down their rugged cheeks and reverend beards. "Now," Bishop Alexander observed, "had an English traveller met this party, he would have taken with him the impression that the gathering together of the Children of Israel was already begun; and it was not until I had met several such, and made particular inquiries, that I found such arrivals only served to replace those who are gone to rest in the Valley of Jehoshaphat."

It is a curious but well ascertained fact, that the Jews do not multiply at present in the native city of their race; few children attain to puberty, and the mortality altogether is so great, that the constant reinforcements from Europe scarcely maintain the average population. They inhabit a quarter of the city between the Hill of Zion and the Temple, now the Mosque of Omar; most of their houses are mean in their external appearance, but, if I may judge from the only specimen of an interior that I saw, this outward show is very deceitful.

* xvi. 21.

The Jews are very fond of news, and therefore partial to foreigners, particularly to the English. I introduced myself to a venerable and noble-looking Hebrew in the street one day, by asking my way to the Pool of Hezekiah, whither he courteously accompanied me, and afterwards invited me to his house. We entered by a very humble doorway from the silent street, and, passing through a dark gallery of some length, entered a large apartment, which equalled in oriental luxury any that I had yet seen. The ceiling was slightly arched, and crusted with stalactites of purple and gold that appeared to have oozed out from some rich treasury above. The walls were of panelled cedar, or some such dark and fragrant wood, exquisitely carved; and curtains of Damascus silk were gathered into thick folds between pilasters of cedar, polished, yet rugged with rich carving. The windows were without glass, but the foliage of some orange-trees softened the sunshine into a delicious gloom, lending all the effect of painted glass, with the addition of a quiver which added coolness to its shade. The furniture was simple, as is customary in the East, consisting only of divans, or wide silken cushions, ranged round the walls, but little elevated above the floor. This was of marble mosaic, wrought into floral emblems, such as bells, pomegranates, &c., with a white marble basin of clear water in the midst. A rich tufted carpet, in which the foot sank as in a meadow, was spread in each corner of the upper end; and, leaving our slippers on the marble floor, we took our seat on the divan. When seated, my host laid his hand upon his breast, and repeated his welcomes. He then clapped his hands; and pipes—an unusual luxury among the Jews — were brought by two little black slaves, with white tunics and scarlet caps. They retired, and we smoked the pipe of repose in such luxury and calm, as my troubled pilgrimage had seldom known till then. I should have supposed myself in some Pasha's seraglio, but for the gabardine and dark turban of my host, and that firm look of lofty determination that is to be seen on every Hebrew brow, undimmed by the disasters and degradations of two thousand years.

My entertainer spoke with respect of Bishop Alexander, and of the other missionaries: he said he gave them credit for the best motives, but that it was all in vain to hope to proselytize his people. "The Romans," he added with enthusiasm, "could not condemn Manlius in sight of the capitol, and the Hill of Zion is not a likely spot for a Jew to forsake the faith of his forefathers. "The Christians do not honour Zion less," I observed, "because they also point to Calvary. They go with you hand in hand as far as re-

gards this world's sacred history, and far beyond you then, into a heaven which you have hoped for from the days of Abraham, and which you will not receive, because different from that which you expected."

The dark eyes of the Hebrew literally glowed beneath his grey and shaggy eyebrows, as he raised his arm in vehement gesticulation, that contrasted strangely with the repose of the rest of his draperied figure. "Englishman!" he exclaimed, in a voice that seemed to gurgle from his heart, "you know not what you say." Suddenly the door opened, the tapestry that hung over it was moved aside by a beautifully rounded arm on which jewels gleamed, and there stepped forth a female form which fascinated my attention as if it had been a vision. Imagine a Rebecca, in all the chastened pomp of dress and beauty, that Sir Walter Scott has painted with such vivid words—even such she stood before me, a glorious embodiment of all the best attributes of her pure and noble race. Such might Eve herself have been, so might her daughters have looked when angels sought their mortal love. Miriam, Jael, Judith, and the gentle Ruth, all the heroic spirits of Judah's line, might have been represented under that form, (but not the Maid Mother.) I know not how she was dressed, I scarce know how she looked; but I have a memory before my eyes that seems still to confuse, as it dazzled then.

I only remember a light gauzy turban, with a glittering fringe falling gracefully over the shoulder; masses of black and shining hair that made the forehead and delicately browned cheek look as fair as a Circassian's; if a thought of luxury hovered upon the richly rosy mouth, it was awed into admiration by the large dark eyes, so fearless, yet so modest, glancing round as if they read a meaning in every thing and every where, yet calm and self-possessed in their consciousness of power.

She carried a little tray on which I believe were sweetmeats and sherbets, and bent gracefully forward to offer her refreshments. I started to my feet, and addressed to her some words in Italian, to which she only replied with a shake of her head and a faint smile: she then drew back, while her sister, whom I had not noticed until now, came forward with another tray containing I know not what. I was rather bewildered by the whole scene, and felt that I was embarrassing, by not accepting the hospitalities of my fair hostesses, while a quiet smile played over the features of my venerable host. I need not say I was very anxious to make the most of this rare opportunity of seeing the daughters of Israel in their own home; yet I confess I experienced a sensation of relief when the Jewess maidens retired, and I was left again alone with my entertainer. Controversy was now out of the question. We avoided the subject by mutual consent; and feeling the Eastern restraint which prevented me from alluding to the subject then uppermost in my mind, I only asked whether he considered that there was a perceptible increase in the number of his people at present in Jerusalem. He replied, "that the time was not yet arrived." "Many have their eyes now fixed upon Zion," he continued, "and a very slight matter that we know not of might direct multitudes to this spot: at present we are not more than 4,000 in Jerusalem; but, if our Rabbis were to speak the word, ten times that number would arrive here before the next Passover. There is barely means of subsistence at present for the numbers within the city, and our poverty and Turkish oppression prevent the country round from being brought into cultivation." As he spoke of poverty, I glanced round the splendid apartment, and he added, "It is the mass of our brethren who are poor, even to extremity, and supported entirely by alms from us, and from the Jews of Europe; any of us who are possessed of any wealth, take some pride, perhaps, in the exhibition of it in our houses; which ought not to be. But I must ask you to excuse my taking leave of you, unless you would wish to accompany me to our synagogue, whither I am now obliged to go."

We passed through the dark passage and the mean gate, into the dirty street; and afterwards, when I sought that house again, I could not even identify it among the squalid dwellings with which it was surrounded. Nor did I ever see my host after I parted from him at the door of the synagogue. The next morning I left Jerusalem for Bethlehem and the Jordan, and only returned thither for half an hour to change horses.

The synagogue was a new building, which Mehemet Ali permitted to be erected during his possession of Jerusalem. It was very plain in its decorations, except the altar, which was ornamented by floral emblems, harps, sackbuts, and other ancient devices. A railing on the left marked out the place appropriated to females, and a number of old men were reading in silence at little tables in the unenclosed space, with little square black envelopes fastened on their foreheads. These are the frontlets spoken of in Scripture, and enjoined to be worn between the eyes.

I will not dwell longer on this subject; the Jew has no relation with either the Crescent or the Cross, and would scarcely belong to my subject, but for his enmity against both. The quarter of the city that his people occupies lies between our Church on Zion

and the Mosque of Omar on Mount Moriah, typical of his own position. It is something vindicatory of his character that the same obstinacy with which he rejected the Cross has been extended to the Crescent, which glitters over his humble dwelling, unattractive to him, except perhaps from the gilding that adorns it.

The Jew should be seen at Jerusalem. There, if the missionary or the political economist can make little out of him, he is at least a striking specimen of man.

In the dark-robed form that lingers thoughtfully among the tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat, or bends with black turban to the ground at the "Place of Wailing," you seem to behold a destiny incarnate. That fierce, dark eye, and noble brow; that medallic profile, that has been transmitted unimpaired through a thousand generations and a thousand climates: these are Nature's own illustrations, and vindicate old history. Thou son of a perverse, but mighty generation; thou chosen, yet accursed of Heaven; homeless throughout the world, yet a dweller in all its cities; treasurer of the dross man worships, yet despised by its bigots; thou inhabitest the proudest palaces, and the most sordid huts; thou art welcome in the cabinets of kings, and hooted in the haunts of the destitute.

Thy destiny, that has been so far fulfilled, must yet be gloriously completed. Thy wanderings over the world shall have an end, like the wandering in the desert by which thou wert first disciplined and made fit for freedom:

> And we shall see ye go—hear ye return
> Re-peopling the old solitudes.*

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Here I take leave of Palestine, the general appearance of which I may sum up in the words of the noble authoress of "Gideon." "A country, naturally luxurious, was become barren as the desert, for the labours of the husbandman were vain: fear reigned in every heart; the lands either remained uncultivated, or the rich produce was ravished by the merciless hands of its conquerors. A melancholy spectacle presents itself to the traveller's eye; vineyards trampled by unhallowed feet; corn-fields destroyed or plundered by those who had not sown them, while their owners, in the slothfulness of despair, looked on in passive silence: here and there, one bolder than the rest ventures to till the ground for the relief of a starving family, but he reaps not the fruit of his labours. The heathen, hovering like vultures over their prey, destroy the increase of the earth, and leave no sustenance for man or beast."

The dominion of the Porte is the form which the Curse denounced against Israel and his Land assumes at present. It involves all others.

* R. Browning.

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After Jerusalem, the pilgrimage of the Holy Land has lost its zest. I will not task the reader's patience further on this theme.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### THE LEBANON.

> On to the Mountain! To the Mountain, Druses.
> R. Browning.

Beautiful Beyrout! It is not only now, when seen through the Claude Lorraine glass of Memory, that I yield to thee the palm over all the cities of the earth. Exacting, indeed, must the spirit be that does not rest contented with thy beauty, even while, lover-like, gazing on thee!

It is not only the magnificent scenery; the mountain, with its velvet-like folds, enclosing cascades like silver threads; its snowy peaks, its golden shore: nor the rich gardens that lie around the towered walls; the airy villages, with their silkworm sheds; the purple sea, and the rose-coloured sky, that invest the old Berytus with such a glory.

But the kindling associations that start up at every view; the old Phenician fame; the Greek, the Roman, the Christian, the Crusader's memory; every wave that foams along the shore once heaved beneath the ancient Argosies; every breeze that murmurs through the myrtle whispers of the banners that it once spread out over conquering armies, and the rich tresses that it toyed with in the Paphian bowers.

For Cyprus is almost in sight; yon distant promontory shelters Tripoli; those waters have weltered among the prostrate towers of Tyre and Sidon.

You command in an hour every spot within your view. You clap your hands, and an eager Arabian champs his bit: you loose the rein, and, swift as thought, you are careering through the Pine Forest, or scaling the mountain's side, or traversing the borderland of Palestine: but, with that we have done for ever, and now we mount for Lebanon. Before we revisit Beyrout, we shall have bivouacked on the plains of Baalbec, trodden the snows of Mount Hermon, quaffed the waters of Abana and Pharphar, and shared

the hospitalities of the Princes of the Mountain.

I was awakened one morning, by the sounds of sword and spur upon my staircase, and two young officers of the Vernon burst into my room, equipped for the mountains.

The bustle of preparation is always an amusing excitement to witness, but it is more especially so previous to a Syrian journey. A number and variety of necessaries is required for the journey: tents, carpets, arms, and cooking materials lie strewn about beneath the mulberry-trees; turbaned and scimitared servants are hurrying to and fro, pouring forth torrents of imprecations and directions on the Arab guides and muleteers: the garden is full of horses and mules, neighing, snorting, and ringing their bells. Here a bottle of brandy is being carefully filled, there pistols are being loaded. Now an Arab gallops off on some errand to the city, and now a band of men and boys endeavours to load a kicking mule, with a chorus of execrations.

At length we are all mounted; the mules and guides move off, escorted by our three servants; and we only linger to finish our pipes and take our coffee. Now the portly and long-bearded Antonio holds the stirrup, while Yussef hangs upon the Mameluke bit that scarcely controls the eager horse, whose expanded nostrils seem to snuff the desert air. The beautiful little Salomé hovers round the impatient brute, with pistols that have just received their last polish from her delicate fingers. And now we are off! Beware, ye grave citizens and ye sedate travellers, of those wild sailors!—a cloud of sand rises up among the cactus that overhang the narrow lane; it runs like a roll of musquetry along the beach; now, it subsides at the city-gates, and three young cavaliers emerge from it at a gentler pace as their cavalcade is overtaken.

That cavalcade presented rather an imposing appearance, as we issued from the city towards the Pine Forest. The baggage, horses, and muleteers went first; then our servants, all armed to the teeth; and lastly ourselves, whose moistened horses and bloody spurs showed we had lingered long behind.

After passing through the Pine Forest, we turned off to the left, and were soon climbing what resembled rather the dry bed of a mountain torrent than the high road to the capital of Syria. As we advanced, the variety and extent of the view rapidly increased; each hill that we crowned revealed a noble panorama of the tract that lay between the mountains and the sea. On we went merrily, now among wild groves of myrtle or laurustinus; now emerging upon craggy cliffs, or descending into a green wilderness. Sometimes a forest of pines lent us a friendly shade; sometimes we passed through some flat-roofed village, receiving and returning the salutations of the Druse or Maronite maid or matron. The men were all out at labour on the mountain's side, which is admirably cultivated.

The change from the lowland vassal to the mountain freeman is very striking. This fearless look, the bold bearing of the former, and that respectfulness which always accompanies self-respect, showed in strong contrast to the slave-peasantry of Palestine. There would almost seem to be something geographical in courage: the Tyrol, the Alps and Pyrenees, the Circassian, the Affghan and the Atlas mountains, not to speak of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, have in all ages produced a hero-peasantry; the low countries of the world, with the exception perhaps of Holland and poor Poland, have never similarly distinguished themselves.

We rode, as it seemed, over the roofs of the picturesque village of Ananook, renowned for the beauty of its women. On the left hand, the cottages stood up against the precipice; on the right, their tops were level with the path, and looked out upon the valley far below. Occasionally, a fortress or a convent crowned the top of a hill, or a hamlet peeped from beneath the foliage; but generally the way was wild and lonely.

As soon as we crowned the summit of the Lebanon, the great valley of Cælesyria opened on our view; a magnificent sweep of wide pains, watered by the Liettani, and richly varied by glade and forest, and piled-up cliffs.

The descent was long and difficult and dangerous; but at length we came to the picturesque stream of the Damour, and halted at a Khan by an old bridge. We bathed luxuriously in the bright mountain stream; and delightful it was to change the hot saddle and the labouring horse for that clear, sparkling water, flowing capriciously among shadowy rocks and flowering oleanders.

About sunset we arrived at the antique, crag-perched town of Derr el Kamar, and pitched our tent in an open space without the walls. The name of this stronghold of the Druses implies the "Monastery of the Moon," derived from a convent here dedicated to the Virgin, who is represented as trampling on the Crescent.

There were 1,200 Turkish troops quartered here, to keep the Druses in check; and as we lay upon our carpets, looking down upon the glancing lights that vaguely sketched out the town at our feet, the wild music of the Turkish drum and cymbals came pleasantly to our ears, and was re-echoed by the tower-

ing cliffs and rocky valleys round. A brilliant moon silvered the towers of Beteddeen, upon an opposite mountain peak, and the stars seemed reflected by the lights that gleamed confusedly among the precipices on which the Druses sought freedom and security, where the eagle and gazelle before had found them.

When daylight came, the town revealed itself, scattered, as if it had been dispersed, and was striving to rally, round the gloomy convent that gave it name. A deep ravine separated the rocky summit on which it stands from a similar one opposite, upon which stands Beteddeen,* the palace of the Emir Bescheer, the Prince of the Mountains. Both the steep sides of the hills were covered with terraces supporting soil, on which a well-earned harvest was waving among olive-plantations, and watch-towers, and wine-presses. A sparkling stream ran below, and the beautiful palace crowned the view. Imagine the Isola Bella, with all its gardens, terraces, and pavilions, upheaved from the Lago Maggiore, and placed like a crown on a majestic mountain — and you have Beteddeen.

The path between the palace and the town is so steep and rugged that no English horse, with the most cautious guidance, could safely travel it in an hour, yet the bold cavaliers of the mountain traverse it at speed.

Industry has here triumphed over apparent disadvantage: in Palestine we had just left vast tracts of country teeming with richness unemployed, and fertility left to waste. Here was the mountain's rugged side clothed with soil not its own; and, watered by a thousand rills, led captive through rocky channels from the cataracts afar off. Every spot on which soil could rest, or vine could cling, was in cultivation.

As we rode up to the palace, olive plantations and fig-trees gave us shade, lines of corn waved along hewn terraces, streams gushed from gardens, and then leaped foaming over the rocky road to water others far beneath: all spoke of energy, industry, and activity. And then the villages we passed through had each of them a marble fountain, with its sculptured reservoir, round which were grouped the turbaned traveller, with his camels, or his gaily caparisoned mules; girls with their water-jars; old gossips with their pipes and their garrulity, and children with their laughter and their sports, that are the same over all the world.

After a steep ascent, we passed into the palace between Turkish sentries, and made fast our horses in one of the vast, vaulted stables, that formerly held the Emir's stud of five hundred horses. These lined one side of a spacious courtyard, whose battlemented walls looked out upon Derr el Kamar, the richly varied mountain land below, and the sea afar off. Thence we ascended a flight of broad marble steps to another courtyard, where big-breeched soldier-grooms were leading horses to and fro, and a parade of Turkish troops was going on. On the left of this enclosure was a very picturesque portal of light Saracenic architecture, leading to the Hall of Audience and the private apartments of the Emir. This was finely carved, and painted in the Eastern style; a fantastic-looking gilded crown, something between a tiara and a diadem, was suspended from the roof.

The commanding officer was still in bed, and the others, whom we met walking about, showed little inclination towards civility. Producing the Sultan's firman, I informed the officer on guard that our business—that of amusing ourselves—was urgent, and that we had no time to lose. Straightway the commander was roused up, and came out, half awake and half dressed, to the cloisters where we stood; then, making us some civil speeches, he sent a ghastly-looking lieutenant to show us over the palace.

Although this has been turned into a barrack for 1000 Turkish troops, who have kept garrison here for two years, it is in perfect preservation; and we could not help thinking, as we wandered through marble halls on which the shaggy soldiers lay thickly strewn in their capotes, what a different appearance it would have presented after even a week's occupation by European troops.

There was an extensive labyrinth of halls and chambers, richly gilded and arabesqued: the floors were for the most part paved with mosaic marble, and every apartment was divided into two platforms of different height: the lowest is called the *Leewān*, where the servants stand and wait; the upper has a divan, or wide, low, cushioned, benches, running round the walls: there is no other approach to furniture, and in winter, among these snowy mountains, all this magnificence must look rather more than cool.

Some of the marbled apartments led out upon pretty gardens, shaded with cypresses, myrtles, and lemon-trees: in one stands a handsome but simple monument to the Emir's wife. She was very fond of these gardens; and while war raged in the valleys round, she passed the greater part of her life among the flowers that now bloom over her quiet grave.

The Emir Bescheer, as a Christian, had only this one wife, who died at the age of sixty-eight. Being inconsolable for her loss,

* I know not how this palace has obtained this name in English; in the country, it is always called *Ipteddeen*.

he sent to Constantinople for the three fairest Circassians that could be found, and, selecting one from the number, he remained faithful to her as to his former wife. He has three sons, two of whom share his exile at Constantinople; the third, who is of weak mind, is permitted to reside near here.

W. and I went to visit him, and found him in a prison-looking residence, that contrasted sadly with the palace of his father. He appeared gratified by our visit, and received us with as much distinction, and grace even, as if he was doing the hospitalities of the mountain. He seemed to have a very modest establishment, one servant, and but one handsome pipe. This he smoked himself; but another, the tube of which was a rose-branch so fresh that it had buds and leaves upon it, was brought in for the visitors. He first took a whiff from it, then passed on to me, laying his hands on his heart—the gesticulation of courtesy. Coffee and sherbet were then served by a melancholy-looking servant. Every thing about this state-fallen prince wore an appearance of poverty and sadness: he is evidently under surveillance, and even we should not have been allowed to see him but for the Sultan's firman, a talisman which all are bound to obey. He took a very cordial leave of us, and we returned to the palace that once was his, to be entertained by his tyrants.

We had ordered baths to be prepared there, and now found the magnificent suite of rooms appropriated to that purpose ready to receive us.

We were first conducted into a beautiful pavilion of pale-coloured marble, in the centre of which crystal streams leaped into an alabaster basin from four fountains. Vases of fresh flowers were tastefully arranged round the carved edges of the basin; a roof of soft green and purple porcelain reflected the only light that fell upon this pleasant place.

A Turkish bath is a very complicated business, but, as it is one of the greatest luxuries of the East, and indeed almost a necessary of life, it is fit to give some description of it, which will apply equally to all, from Cairo to Constantinople.

As soon as we laid aside our clothes, attendants brought long napkins, of the softest and whitest linen, which were wreathed into turbans, and togas round us; then, placing our feet in wooden pattens, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, we walked on marble floors through several chambers and passages of gradually increasing heat, until we reached a vaulted apartment, from whose marble sides gushed four fountains of hot water. Here cushions were laid for us, and we were served with pipes, and nargilehs, and iced sherbets: thence we were conducted into the innermost and warmest apartment, where we sat down on marble stools, close to fountains of almost boiling water. This was poured over us from silver cups; we were then covered with a rich foam of scented soap, applied with the silken fibres of the palm, then bathed again with the warm water and shampooed, in which process the whole skin seemed to peel off, and every joint was made to crack. Then we were again lathered, and again soused, and found our skins as flower-soft as that of a little child. We now left the warmest room, and were met at the door by slaves, with bundles of exquisitely soft, warm linen, in which we were again shawled, turbaned, and kilted; and so we passed out into the cool fountain chamber, where another change of linen awaited us.

It was a sudden change from burning suns, and craggy roads, and sweltering horses, to find ourselves reclining on silken cushions, in the shaded niche of an arched window, through which cool breezes, filled with orange perfumes, breathed over us. The sensation of repose after a Turkish bath is at all times delicious; but here it was heightened by every appliance that could win the tranced senses to enjoyment without disturbing their repose. The bubbling of fountains, the singing of birds, the whispering of trees, were the only sounds that reached the ear. The slaves glided about silently and somnambulistically, or stood with folded arms watching for a sign. If the languid eye was lifted to the window, it found a prospect of unequalled splendour over the mountains to the sea; and nearer, were rich gardens, and basins full of gold fishes, swimming about with such a luxurious motion that it rested the sight to follow them. There were amber-mouthed pipes of delicious Latakeea, and fragrant coffee, and sherbet cooled in the fountain; and black slaves, with gold-embroidered napkins to wipe our hands.

This was too pleasant to last long; the soft slippers gave way to the heavy boot, the light turban of the Serai to that of the mountain. The last process was a shower of rose-water sprinkled over us; and then we took a last view of the spacious courts, with their long array of cloisters, built lightly and gracefully, as if in bowers; the princely pile of Saracenic elegance that surmounted these, and the vaulted stables that supported them; and then we dashed away at a gallop, with more of enmity than of gratitude towards our usurping entertainers.

The ancient hospitality of Beteddeen was very magnificent, but the aged Emir who exercised it is now a prisoner at Constantinople.

We hastily visited two smaller palaces in the neighbourhood, with pretty courtyards,

and shadowy arcades, and marble fountains. These were intended by the old Emir for his mother and his eldest son; they are now filled with Turkish soldiers.

We broke away over the mountains at a gallop where it seemed too steep to walk. We had sent on our servants early, and now lost our way, but still pushed on, though it was a wild country to ride a steeplechase in. We came at last upon a beautiful little village, clinging to the side of a precipice, with cascades gushing through its streets and overarching some of them. Here we found ourselves in the right way; and S—— and Demetri separated from us on their way to Damascus, while we proceeded to visit the Emir Sadadeen.

Our way henceforth for some hours lay through scenery without a parallel perhaps, in Europe. All the picturesque and imposing, all the awful, yet winning effect, that hill, and vale, and water can produce, are here. Torn mountains, black precipices, thundering torrents, yawning rifts, soft, sunny glades, pale green vineyards, wide spreading forests, flat-roofed cottages, sparkling rills, terraced cultivation, and a brilliant sky over all make up a picture that is, I believe, unequalled.

We climbed and scrambled up many a weary mountain on which the sun shone fiercely and shadowless, and on, through many a gloomy gorge and deep valley of richest verdure, until sunset found us at the most beautiful spot in Syria, the little village of Gezeen. We had long seen it nestling in its rich plantations from the mountain path along which we rode, but the descent was so winding and precipitous, that it required hours to reach it. As we began to descend from the heights, a large eagle floated majestically past us; another and another succeeded, until we counted twenty-three. "Some man or beast has turned into a carcase," I observed, as we saw this formidable procession. "Depend on it," said my companion, "S.'s or Demetri's horse has died." We found out afterwards that such was the case; and it is a curious fact that, however lonely or lifeless the most secluded valley among these mountains may appear, the moment an animal falls dead, specks begin to appear over the horizon, which soon swell into eagles or vultures, that have received summons, by some sense we know nothing of, to attend the banquet.

As we rode through the village of Gezeen, the people ran to their doors and the roofs of their houses, and gave us kindly salutation. When we passed through, we came to a little grassy dell, watered by a sparkling stream, that flowed beneath the shade of spreading trees.

Our tent was pitched under a majestic sycamore: no sight could be more picturesque, or more welcome to weary travellers. A blazing fire under a neighbouring cliff shot up sparks through the myrtles, and round it sat a number of villagers in their vivid and varied attire, contrasted with the dark robes of two Maronite priests belonging to the adjacent convent.

They all rose as we approached, and greeted us with a cordiality that showed they were Christians. As we sat at the door of our tent after dinner, they placed themselves round us in a ring, asking questions, and listening with avidity to all they heard.

The next morning we were wakened by the pleasant tones of the church-bell ringing to matins, and soon afterwards the valley was full of men, women, and children, passing to prayer.

We started soon after sunrise; and, after travelling some hours, arrived at the river Liettani, winding slowly among green banks, sheltered by poplars and sycamores, in a deep dell, surrounded by steep cliffs and towering mountains. Thence emerging over another chain of hills, we saw a wide, peaceful-looking valley, through which the young Jordan was flowing between ranks of poplars. Fording this stream, we ascended by a steep and rugged path to the village of Hasbeya, in front of whose precipitous site stands the Palace of the Emir Sadadeen. The sources of the Jordan are here, and we found groups of village girls filling their water-jars at its sacred fountain.

We rode up a flight of stone steps under an archway, into a large quadrangular court with a cistern in the midst. On one side was a range of stables, open, as are all the stables in this country, to the air; opposite was a high wall, loopholed, and looking down into a steep valley; within rose an incongruous and picturesque pile of halls and towers, almost equalling Kenilworth in extent.

No part of this palace has any pretensions to either strength or beauty, and I was not a little disappointed at the air of poverty, discomfort, and decay, that pervaded this princely residence. On the south side, the village of Hasbeya, bosomed in trees, ran down the hill-side to the very walls; on the north, a deep ravine yawned between them and the opposing mountain. We were told that the Emir was out upon the Hills, but on learning that we had a letter of introduction to him, we were requested to put up our horses, and make ourselves at home.

We ascended several flights of stairs, and, passing through some dirty, ruinous passages, came to a flat roof, over which a mat was suspended as an awning, upon poles. This was the Emir's drawing-room: we sat down

upon the ground, and were soon engaged in familiar conversation with a merchant from Bagdad, and some of the village authorities, who were waiting for the prince.

Refreshments were brought in on a pewter tray, and placed upon a little stool; they consisted of sour milk, with celery and cucumbers chopped therein; curds and whey, with mint strewn over it; bread and cheese. Hunger made us swallow this uninviting fare with avidity, and just then the servant shouted "Look, look!" and pointed to the brow of the opposite hill. There was the Emir on horseback, surrounded by a well-armed and goodly company of sons and followers, in blue and crimson jackets, riding in files along the narrow path.

W. and I now hastened to dress, and were shown into a large, gloomy apartment, which we fancied was the harness-room, or the servants' hall. Just as we were undressed, in walked the Emir himself—we were in his hall of audience! He was accompanied by an imposing-looking train of village elders, who took their seats, according to their respective ranks, round the room upon the floor; they had all long beards and flowing robes, and formed a very reverend-looking senate.

The Emir Sadadeen is a handsome man of about sixty years of age; his countenance showed a want of energy or talent, but was gentle, yet commanding-looking. After some conversation with us, he proceeded to business, and heard and settled disputes until dinner was announced. Then we all rose, and returned to the terraced roof, on which we again took our places under the mat canopy. A little stool was again placed in our circle, and on it a large pewter tray, in the centre of which was an immense wooden bowl of rice stewed in grease; round this were six or seven little earthenware dishes, containing stewed liver, sausages, a sort of rissole wrapped in vine-leaves, and some other abominations; we had no plates or knives and forks, but each guest was supplied with a large flat cake of barley-bread and a wooden spoon.

To this moment, I scarcely know how those people got their greasy food into their mouths. All ate rapidly and in silence, and, the moment dinner, and grace, and ablutions were over, all dispersed without further ceremony. The tray and its contents were transferred to our dragomans and the upper servants; and when they had finished, the small remnant was handed over to the lower servants and our muleteers.

When we called for water, an attendant served us in a large delf-bowl; the Emir alone drank from a glass goblet. Dinner over, water and soap were brought in a perforated basin and ewer. Slaves poured the former over our hands, and each used the soap in turn.

W. and I took a stroll after dinner to the fountains of the Jordan, to see the women drawing water, and were then shown to our sleeping-room, the eternal divan. Here my servant got us some tea and toast of our own, and we lay down upon the marble floor to take such sleep as swarms of fleas would permit.

The next morning, before sunrise, we were told that the Emir was coming; so we were obliged to make a hasty breakfast and toilette, while he was waiting in the cloister. Again he took his seat on the divan. All the village elders were again assembled round him; and, after the compliments of the morning, he proceeded to transact business. Soon afterwards, we took our leave, and departed.

This Emir exercises feudal hospitality after the fashion of our olden times, and we probably saw in this comfortless castle scenes similar to what England witnessed five hundred years ago. We traversed a wide, mountainous district for some hours; and, leaving Mount Hermon on our right, we came to the palace of Emir Afendi, in the midst of the precipitous village of Rascheia. Several horses were picketted in the courtyard below, whence we ascended by about twenty steps to another court, which was flagged and shaded by a noble sycamore: along the left ran a lofty gallery, open in front, in a corner of which sat the venerable Emir, with a snow-white beard, and a spotless turban of embroidered muslin. On presenting our letters, we were received with great civility, and assured that the palace, with all that it contained, was at our disposal. This expression of politeness was, at the same time, enhanced and neutralized by a constellation of bright eyes, that twinkled from the latticed hareem.

We were allowed to dine by ourselves in a small and dark apartment; but the Emir's physician, followed by a crowd of servants and mountain warriors, soon invaded our privacy, and they squatted round us on the dirty floor, eagerly asking for and examining everything that we possessed. The physician sold us some antique arms, and the Emir himself afterwards disposed of some old coins to us for a "consideration."

The two eldest sons of the Emir were out on an expedition in search of some criminals who had murdered a Christian woman with her Turkish paramour. One only of the Emir's family was at home, a fat, jolly-looking young Arab, with a very knowing eye. He showed us a couple of fine falcons, but we could not prevail upon him to take them to the field: he said they never hawked until September, in consideration of the young

partridge and gazelles. Imagine game-laws on Mount Hermon!

We took a stroll about the village in the evening with the young Emir, who was respectfully but affectionately saluted by all the people whom we met. On our return to the castle, our host kept us for some time standing in front of the hareem, evidently in compliance with a request from its fair inmates.

The next morning, before daylight, W. and I set off for the summit of Djebel Sheikh, the "Chief of the Mountains." This is the highest point of Syria, the last of the Anti-Lebanon range, and is better known as the ancient Hill of Hermon. We rode through some rugged valleys and tracts of vineyards, and, leaving our horses at one of the sheds in the latter, began the steep and laborious ascent. I have climbed Snowdon, Vesuvius, Hungry Hill, Mount Epernes, and many others, but this was the heaviest work of all.* We found, moreover, to our great disappointment, that there was not a drop of water to be had upon our route. The snow is perpetual on the summit of the mountain, but only lies in streaks in summer. When we arrived at the first tract, it only mocked our thirst, yielding just as much moisture as our lips could melt. Our guide broke off large masses, and placing them in the sun, a precious little rivulet trickled down into our parched mouths.

After six hours' toilsome journey, we stood upon the summit, and perhaps the world does not possess a more magnificent view than that which we then beheld.

We looked down from the Hill of Hermon over the Land of Israel. The mountain fell away in many a hill and valley to what seemed a perfect plain below. There gleamed the bright blue sea of Galilee, and nearer, bosomed by the last of the mountain undulations, was Lake Hooly, with Banias, the ancient Dan, upon its banks. This vast and varied plain, on which lay mapped a thousand places familiar to the memory, was bounded on the right by the Mediterranean, whose purple waters whitened round Sidon, Tyre, and the distant Promontorium Album, over which just appeared the summit of Mount Carmel: on the left of the plain a range of hills divided the Haouran (the country of Bozrah and Djerash) from Samaria. Further on, towards the Eastern horizon, spread the plain of Damascus, and the desert towards Palmyra.

To the North, the wide and fertile valley of Bekaa lay between the two great chains of the Lebanon and Antilebanon; the latter of whose varied hills and glens, specked with forests and villages, lay beneath my feet. Nothing but lakes were wanting to the valleys, nothing but heather to the mountains. All was naked on the latter, except where the snow mantled upon the heights; but below there was not even a patch of moss or lichen to clothe the rugged rock.

We caught some goats after a hard chase, and, milking them on the snow, drank eagerly from this novel dairy. Soon afterwards, we found a little fountain gushing from a snowy hill; and only those who have climbed a mountain 9,000 feet high, under a Syrian sun, can appreciate the luxury of such a draught as that cool, bubbling rill afforded.

As we descended, the views seemed to multiply, and the clearness of the atmosphere enabled us to see as far as the diminution of objects would allow. Rascheya lay far beneath us, like scattered dominoes, and the cultivated valleys looked like strips of the Cameronian plaid.

W. and I parted company during a chase after some gazelles; and as his ship sailed just as I reached Beyroot, the only information I obtained of his further proceedings was in the following letter. I subjoin it, as combining with the characteristic style of his profession a lively humour and energy of expression, that does no discredit to his classic name. He is at this moment on his way to the far West; and a finer or more chivalrous fellow does not belong to the proud flag he sails under.

"You remember I left you on the Djebel Shieckh, where you had lost every thing, even yourself; I believe, first the gazelles, next your horse, and lastly me. I left Rasheia before you arrived, having first rather astonished our fat friend by my powers of destroying eggs and coffee. The road across the plain, that from the mountain appeared so level, was a mere deception, and it required constant use of my spurs and pipe-stick* to keep the gallant grey and my rascally servant Michael up to the mark.

"We soon crossed the plain that separates the Lebanon and Antilebanon, and began to ascend the mountain. About sunset we reached a pretty village, where I would willingly have rested, but, as Mr. Michael said we must, I of course said no. He maintained the roads were unsafe at night, and that he did not know them: however, after a due proportion of pipe-stick, we continued our route, and wandered over stones and miseries till midnight; I driving him on, and consoling him with the assurance that my pistol should be fired at him if we were attacked.

* Our guide had been directed by his chief to take us to the top of the mountain, and, with a single-minded fidelity, was determined to fulfil his best. If he thought we lingered or hesitated, he threw himself into an attitude that made one great finger-post of him, and shouted "Foke! Foke!"—*(To the top! to the top!)* We often after used this as a "cri de guerre."

* The duties of this pipe-stick were very various, now a cudgel, now a calumet, and now a missile.

"Talking of comparisons, how brave one becomes when one is with a greater coward than oneself! now it is surely no vanity to boast more than he possessed. You remember the day he led us a round of two hours to escape those robbers we were so anxious to encounter, and the pleasant way he had of firing off his pistols, which made me gallop forward and nearly lose the grey in fear for my property. Well, to return: at midnight the barking of dogs informed us we were near a village, and I accordingly ordered him to find the Mutsellim,* which he, more afraid of him than even of me, would not do, till I kicked at a door, when, to escape the wrath of the sleepers, he went about and brought him to me. I dismounted, and requested the Mutsellim to give me food and fire, a resting-place, and a guide. Civilly requesting me to follow, he led the way out of the village, and my Hermon-worn-out boot soon told me we had left the road, and were getting into a swamp; turning to me, he then informed me of his gracious pleasure that I might rest there. 'Bless my soul and body!' exclaimed I, 'I have not come all this way to ask your leave to sleep in a field. I might have done that long ago upon the mountains: however, I will soon find lodgings for myself.' Then, turning round, I walked back to the village, and, thundering at a door, demanded admittance. I soon obtained it, led both horses in, and asked for food. I really think it was that same cursed tailor's house who would taste and drink every thing the time we were at Gezeen together. Well, a Maronite priest soon procured me coffee, milk, and bread; this, with your macaroni, made a worthy feast; and over our pipes, the Padre, who belonged to the convent hard by, seemed a rakish fellow, and let me into all the scandal of the place. He said the Druse superiority consisted only in their arms, for the Maronites had been induced by their priests to yield all theirs up to Ibrahim Pacha; it was his conviction that if their friends, the English, knew this, they would assist them; more especially as they were of the same religion. This I readily acceded to, as I wanted breakfast on the morrow, and I promised, moreover, to send him as many musquets as he wished, as soon as I reached Portsmouth.

"Our harmony was now complete; an admiring throng surrounded us, and applauded all I did. One of the fellows brought a bit of an old French newspaper carefully wrapped up in cloths, which I of course told him was very valuable, and worthy of keeping. Well! the Padre and I drank brandy and water, and then, worse luck, began arguing upon theology; he waxed warm, and had I not put the brandy by, the applauders might have finished my career for me. The brandy being secreted, the priest lay down to rest, and I, poking my head out of the only window in the hovel, soon dozed off. Hardly was I quiet, ere I felt myself gradually pulled out of my snug billet, and another fellow poking himself into my place. Rising up, I soon laid hold of his legs, and hauled him out again, transferring myself to the window; again I dozed, and again was pulled out, but not with the same gentleness as before. Groping about for some instrument of torture, at last I found the string at the top of a loaf of sugar, with which, after quietly pulling my unknown enemy out of the window, I gave him a dab over the nose that astonished him. He jumped up; I lay down in his place; the sounds of scuffling and then a woman's cries met my ear: I suppose he pitched into her in the dark, in mistake for me.

* The village mayor.

"Taking all my evening's adventures into consideration, and the amusement that various insects seemed to derive from my company during the night, I judged it desirable to start at daylight: therefore, leaving the priest in the corner to sleep off the brandy, I roused Michael, by heaving my saddle at his head; kicked the tailor up, drank a lot of water, our usual breakfast, and galloped off. For several hours we descended among the fir groves to the north of Djouni, and, bathing in the river, I sent Michael on to prepare breakfast.

"You may remember, my dear friend, how delightful the plunges in the river seemed after the heat and dust of our day's travel, and the miseries of the night; though those passed in your tent were glorious exceptions. Do you remember, too, how dear our passion for ablutions once nearly cost us, when our audience to the Emir was given at Hasbeia, by you dressed only in a couple of towels, and me in a sort of Highland costume of boots and shooting-jacket?

"At last, Djouni rose before me; visions of coffee and eatables were realized, and I made a charming acquaintance in my host's most lovely daughter. I sent that rascal Michael on, and told him to await me at the Nahr el Damour, and to feed his horse, while I rested myself; mean time, I wandered, smoked, and made love amidst the lovely groves and bowers of Miladi's deserted palace. Willingly I thought would I then have given up my bright hopes, my thirst of better deeds, and my profession itself, for a life like this; but evening soon warned me to go, and, taking my spleen out on the side of my poor grey, I never pulled rein till Michael's form appeared waiting, mounted ready to join me. He had taken the precaution, however, of getting on the Beyrout side of the river, so as to have a fair start in the event of a row or a run, on which latter he calculated with certainty. To eject him from his seat, by taking one leg and throwing him off on the other side, to heave the saddle off his horse and put mine on, and to mount, did not take long.

"'What for you do that, sir?—what for you do so?' was all he could say, as I ordered him to come on as fast as possible, while he stood in hopeless misery, looking at my late charger; who, head down, tail out, and quivering in every limb, stood the model of inutility as to going a-head. On I went though, and, pulling up at a khan, asked for a fresh horse: for over-work, short rest, hard riding, and original badness, all conspired against my miserable animal carrying me much further. However, my appearance I suppose would not warrant them letting me have one; so, after a long contest between self and going on, for my last swig of brandy, I compromised the matter by giving my horse first drink, and finished it myself. He was a lion again immediately he swallowed it; and, taking him while he was in the humour, away I went: but, alas! those cursed sands! I never yet went the proper road over them, though I tried it often, and somehow one gets an unlucky knack of going round and round under certain circumstances.

"My horse waxed drunken, and I more ill-tempered, till at last 'the drunk' forsook him, and spur, pipe-stick, and conversation were equally thrown away upon him: even walking behind and pricking him on with my sword were useless.

"However, at last we reached the beach; and, consigning him to Assaid's man to take home carefully, and not let him run away, I went on board, and so to sup and bed. On inquiry the next day, I found he could not be induced to walk even home; however, very often afterwards, he pranced spicily by, regarding me with looks of love.

"And now farewell: my travelling with you, worse luck! is over for a time, but the remembrance of our journeys together will blasé me, I fear, for all future ones.

"F. W——E."

When I reached Rascheya, I found my fellow-traveller, whose leave was expired, had departed. Even among these mountaineers he had ingratiated himself, and I found the Emir full of anxieties about the danger of his going alone, and regrets for his departure.

It was now growing late, and the Emir advised me to wait until the next morning to pursue my journey, as the roads were unsafe. My apprehensions of danger, however, whatever they might have been, were by this time considerably blunted; and, as I feared the Emir's fleas more than his freebooters, I prepared to depart.

He then offered me an escort, which I also declined, and set out alone on my road to Damascus. The way was very solitary, lying for the most part between barren mountains, broken by frequent precipices, amongst which we soon lost our way. Whilst hesitating what direction to move in next, the moon suddenly disappeared, and it became so dark that we were obliged to lie down for the night where we were, tying our horses to our feet. The muleteer removed the bells from their necks, lest their sound should attract the robbers of whom we had been warned.

## CHAPTER L.

### DAMASCUS.

From the land where our masters no longer can task us,
I shall see the rich forest that waves o'er Damascus;
From the peaks of high Lebanon, sacred and hoary,
I shall look o'er that country, and think of its glory.
SIR J. HANMER.

DAY dawned upon our rocky couch in a couple of hours. We had been sleeping under our horses, and they had never stirred a limb for fear of hurting us.* The evening before, our path had lain among bosomy hills, and quiet-looking, drab-coloured valleys. This scenery, if not attractive, was at least inoffensive; and when daylight came, and found where we had wandered to, the change was great indeed. It seemed as if some great battle of the elements had taken place during the night; the rocks been rent asunder in the struggle, and Nature ghastlily wounded in the fray. Wildly distorted as the scenery seemed when the sun shone over it, there was a fearful silence and want of stir that enhanced its effect. Cliffs nodded over us as if they had been awake all night and could stand it no longer; precipices and dark ravines yawned beneath us, fixed, as it were, in some spasm of the nightmare. Not a living thing was to be seen around, no drop of water, no leaf of tree—nothing but a calm, terrible sunshine above, and blackened rocks and burnt soil below.

We emerged from these savage gorges into a wide, disheartening plain, bounded by an amphitheatre of dreary mountains. Our horses had had no water for twenty-four hours, and we had had no refreshment of any kind for twenty. Finding there was still a gallop in my steed's elastic limbs, I pushed on for Damascus, leaving my people to follow as they might. After a couple of hours' hard riding, I came to another range of mountains, from beyond which opened the view of Damascus, from which the Prophet abstained as too delicious for a believer's gaze.

It is said that after many days of toilsome travel, when he beheld this city thus lying at his feet, he exclaimed, "But one Paradise is allowed to man; I will not take mine in this world;" and so he turned away his horse's head from Damascus, and pitched his tent in the desert.

I reined up my steed with difficulty on the side of the mountain; he had already, perhaps, heard the murmur of the distant waters, or instinct told him that Nature's life-streams flowed beneath that bright green foliage. For miles around us lay the dead desert, whose sands appeared to quiver under the shower of sunbeams;* far away to the south and east it spread like a boundless ocean; but there, beneath our feet, lay such an island of verdure as no where else perhaps exists. Mass upon mass of dark, delicious foliage rolled like waves among garden tracts of brilliant emerald green. Here and there, the clustering blossoms of the orange or the nectarine lay like foam upon that verdant sea. Minarets, white as ivory, shot up their fairy towers among the groves; and purple mosque-domes, tipped with the golden crescent, gave the only sign that a city lay bowered beneath those rich plantations.

One hour's gallop brought me to the suburban gates of Mezzé, and thenceforth I rode on through streets, or rather lanes, of pleasant shadow. For many an hour we had seen no water: now it gushed, and gleamed, and sparkled all around us; from aqueduct above, and rivulet below, and marble fountain in the walls—everywhere it poured forth its rich abundance; and my horse and I soon

* The "dew of Hermon" fell so heavily during the night, that it ran off our capotes in rivulets, when we shook them;—one of the thousand instances of the faithful reflection of the past in the present.

* I do not know whether this is the effect of any possible evaporation, or of the refraction of the rays of light; but all within the horizon seemed sometimes of a stir, which was very trying to the sight.

quenched our burning thirst in Abana and Pharphar.

On we went, among gardens, and fountains, and odours, and cool shade, absorbed in sensations of delight, like the knights of old who had just past from some ordeal to its reward. Fruits of every delicate shape and hue bended the boughs hospitably over our heads; flowers hung in canopy upon the trees, and lay in variegated carpet on the ground; the lanes through which we went were long arcades of arching boughs; the walls were composed of large square blocks of dried mud, which in that bright, dazzling light somewhat resembled Cyclopean architecture, and gave, I know not what, of simplicity and primitiveness to the scene.

At length I entered the city, and thenceforth lost the sun while I remained there. The luxurious people of Damascus exclude all sunshine from their bazaars by awnings of thick mat, wherever vine-trellises or vaulted roofs do not render this precaution unnecessary.

The effect of this pleasant gloom, the cool currents of air created by the narrow streets, the vividness of the bazaars, the variety and beauty of the Oriental dress, the fragrant smell of the spice-shops, the tinkle of the brass cups of the seller of sherbets—all this affords a pleasant but bewildering change from the silent desert and the glare of sunshine.

And then the glimpses of places strange to your eye, yet familiar to your imagination, that you catch as you pass along. Here is the portal of a large khan, with a fountain and cistern in the midst. Camels and bales of merchandize and turbaned negroes are scattered over its wide quadrangle, and an arcade of shops or offices surrounds it, above and below, like the streets of Chester. Another portal opens into a public bath, with its fountains, its reservoirs, its gay carpets, and its luxurious inmates, clothed in white linen, and reclining upon cushions as they smoke their chibouques.

There is but one wretched little hotel in this city of 120,000 inhabitants. The Orientals always occupy the khans, and there are but few Europeans who visit the remote metropolis of Syria.

In the luxury of a Turkish bath, I soon forgot the fatigue of a thirty hours' journey; and even my horse (who, however, had been resting while I was climbing Mount Hermon) soon recovered his spirits and condition. After breakfast, the first food or drink I had tasted for twenty-four hours, I went to visit Mr. Wood, the British Consul. His hospitable house is one of the handsomest in Syria, though you enter it from a dull street, by a low and unpretending portal.

A group of Janizaries and other servants were lounging about the small outer court, whence I passed into a garden, round three sides of which the apartments ranged. A little lake of crystal water lay enclosed by marble banks, and overshadowed by beautiful weeping-willows; little fountains leaped and sparkled in all directions, "and shook their loosened silver in the sun." Arcades of orange, and lemon, and mimosa-trees afforded a quivering shade to the marble mosaic paths and the parterres of flowers. At one end of this court, or garden, was a lofty alcove, with a ceiling richly carved in gold and crimson fretwork; the walls are ornamented with arabesques, and a wide divan runs round the three sides of the apartment, which opens on the garden and its fountains.

Next to this alcove is a beautiful drawing-room, with marble floor and arabesque roof, and carved niches, and softened light falling on delicately-painted walls; in the midst is an alabaster basin, into which water falls from four fantastic little fountains.

Mr. Wood appears to have extensive influence among the Arabs, and much consideration among the Turks. He has travelled very widely in the East, and seems to understand its various people well. I would gladly enliven these pages with some of his amusing Eastern anecdotes and information, but for the character of confidence that every private conversation possesses, or should possess.

After one night's trial of the hotel, the traveller will be glad to remove to the Franciscan convent, which, though squalid enough, is comparatively free from vermin. The terrace, too, upon this convent commands the best view perhaps of the city, and, on a moonlight night, is the most pleasant place imaginable to smoke "the pipe of repose." The fathers, moreover, are jovial fellows, and possess a capital cellar of the "Vino d'oro," for which the Lebanon is famous.

Then the young Christian women of the city come hither in numbers to confession, which, if their tongue be as candid as their eloquent eyes, must be rather a protracted businss. Although, like the Moslemin, these fair penitents wear the yashmak, or veil, in the streets, they afford ample opportunity to the stranger to judge of their far-famed beauty while wandering about these cloisters, waiting till the little confessional is vacant, or, perchance, until they have more to say to its cowled occupant. And they *are* passing fair, these Damascus, or (as it is called in Arabic) these Shām Christians: but the Jewess, with her aristocratic mien, her proud yet airy step, and eagle eye, throws all others into the shade, and vindicates her lineal descent from Eve on this, Eve's native land.

I thought Damascus was a great improve

ment upon Cairo, in every respect. It is much more thoroughly Oriental in its appearance, in its mysteries, in the look and character of its inhabitants. The spirit of the Arabian Nights is still quite alive in these, its native streets; and not only do you hear their fantastic tales repeated to rapt audiences in the coffee-houses, but you see them hourly exemplified in living scenes.

In most countries it is undignified and dangerous to speak a language imperfectly; but, in the East, where everything goes by contraries, it is one of the marks of high breeding and superiority. The lordly Turk never condescends to give himself any trouble about the Arab's language, and therefore his words, like those of other fashionables, are few, and eagerly listened to. This peculiarity not only assists one in society, but also enables the traveller to wear the Turkish dress undiscovered. This is by far the handsomest, most comfortable, and best adapted to the climate and the habits of life; besides which it enables the wearer to mingle unobserved and unavoided in the places whence he can derive most amusement.

Damascus life begins very early in the morning, and the shops are almost all closed by one or two o'clock in the afternoon. Thenceforth the cafés and the gardens become filled, and, after sunset, you seldom meet any one in the streets; the few who appear there are obliged to carry lanterns, and the different quarters of the town are enclosed by guarded gates.

The rides about Damascus are very striking and pleasant. You wander through a labyrinth of sycamore, or walnut-shaded lanes, with bright Abana and Pharphar gleaming through the foliage, or sparkling in stream or fountain. Sometimes you find a picturesque mill terminating the path that has led you wandering, and sometimes you come upon a group of Syrians smoking indolently in an arbour, or rushing about like maniacs on active horses, that seem to enjoy their wild game of the Jareed as much as their riders.

There is little to be seen in Damascus, except the city's self. No vestige remains of the palaces of the Sultans, and, indeed, few of any other antiquity, though this is probably the most ancient city in the world. Eleazer, the trusty steward of Abraham, was a citizen of it nearly 4,000 years ago, and the Arabs maintain that Adam was created here out of the red clay that is now fashioned by the hand of the potter into other forms.

Damascus is all of a bubble with nargilehs and fountains; the former are in every mouth, and the latter gush from every corner of the street. These fountains are in themselves very characteristic; beautifully carved with fanciful designs, that seem ever striving to evade the Moslem's law against imitating anything in creation.

The heat of the climate is turned into a source of pleasure, by the cool currents of air that are ingeniously cultivated, and the profusion of ices, creams, and juicy fruits, that everywhere present themselves. Many of the shopkeepers have large feather fans, which are in constant flutter; and even the jewellers, as they work in public, turn aside from the little crucibles, in which ingots of gold and silver are learning ductility and obedience to art, to fan their pallid cheeks, and agitate their perfumed beards with these wide-spread fans.

I was never tired of roaming through the bazaars of Damascus; I strolled about them by the hour, watching the life and little interests of the pale people who live and die in their shadowy arcades.

The merchants sit on their counters; you stand in the street; there is no house to enter, but the whole bazaar is like one great shop, with a number of shelves ranged along its sides in little niches. On each shelf is a man or a boy, whose long draperies are arranged gracefully round them; immense turbans, of some costly material and very vivid colours, on their heads. Here is a pale boy, with a brilliantly gay shawl folded round his brow, working lace in a hand-loom, and watching the shop at the same time; there is a man of seventy, with snowy beard and cashmere shawl, and pale pink gabardine, and mulberry-coloured mantle. Here a handsome young Turk is measuring English chintz to a woman veiled from head to foot in a white shroud-like sheet, with a dark-coloured handkerchief over her face; there, a water-carrier walks swiftly by, jingling his bright brazen cups together; he has an immense glass jar, full of iced sherbet, slung under his arm; its long neck is tipped with a lump of snow and a bunch of flowers: you drink a deep draught of the nectar, your servant pays four paras (about half a farthing), and he moves on. Here a speculator in smoke is walking about with a sheaf of nargilehs, which he puts unasked into his customers' mouths. They smoke, apparently unconsciously: and, when the proprietor returns, he receives about a farthing as his fee. There is a man selling coloured ices at a halfpenny a saucerful. There trays of fruit attract your eye—plums, apricots, and enormous water-melons that melt in the mouth like snow; here comes a donkey, laden with cucumbers, apparently the favourite refreshment, for almost every one stops him; here a string of tall, awkward camels fills the narrow street; there, seated on his shopboard, is an old man drowsily nodding among the silks of India

and Syria; and there are two pale boys playing dominoes in an armourer's shop, from the roof of which daggers hang like the sword of Damocles, and quantities of ivory-handled knives, that make the niche look like a cave of stalactites.

On the whole, the bazaars are much better and more striking than those of Cairo, though still rather mean and contemptible when you come to examine or to value them. Many of the shopkeepers are mere amateurs — men who have land or houses, but who amuse themselves by sitting crosslegged from morning to night, and selling their quaint commodities in the cool shade.

The women of Damascus are said to be very handsome, and I think deserve this, as well as other less complimentary reputations. They affect a deep seclusion, like the Cairenes, and are more ingenious perhaps in evading its restrictions.

The Turks here are more fanatical than in any part of the East, except Mecca; and it is nearly impossible to visit the mosques. The risk incurred in doing so is of that unpleasant kind that has nothing redeeming or tempting in its exploit. These mosques are inhabited by a set of filthy dervishes, who assail a Christian with every sort of insult and outrage, even if protected by the Sultan's firman and the Pasha's officers.

The Christians, for the most part, belong to the Latin Church; there are some Greeks, and a few Armenians; they amount in all to about 5,000, out of a population of 110,000. They are as fanatical and grossly ignorant as the Moslems; at least, those few, even of the wealthier class, with whom I had an opportunity of conversing. Mr. Graham, a missionary of the Church of England, is about to establish himself here, where he will apparently find as little opportunity as encouragement. The Jews amount in numbers to six or seven thousand, and have the reputation of great wealth.

The street which is called "straight" extends from the gate named Babel Hadji* to the great bazaar. St. Paul's window is still shown in the walls, and these two localities are almost the only remains, except the base of some of the old walls, that connect the city with its past. In general, where there are no bazaars, the streets are blank, dull, and windowless; but the low and narrow doorways that open from these unpromising exteriors led to houses of great beauty, richness, and picturesqueness. There is always a courtyard, with a high alcove on one side, where the divan is spread. Staircases, overarched by trelliced vines, and open to the air, lead, under broad eaves, to the upper stories and the housetop. A fountain plays in a little garden in the centre of the court, and its basin is surrounded with gardens, and sheltered by palm or orange trees. If a stranger enters, the Moslem women retire to the hareem above, and peep from its latticed windows; but I was acquainted with some Christian families, in which the women remained undisturbed by visitors, and continued their embroidery or other work without interruption, though they seldom joined in conversation.

I made the acquaintance of an Arab physician, who was possessed of considerable wealth, and was, moreover, a person of literary attainments, and apparently free from the prejudices, if not from the belief, of the Koran. I accepted an invitation to visit him one evening; and, after traversing many silent streets with guarded gates at either end, I arrived at one of the low and unpretending doorways I have mentioned.

I was admitted by a tall black slave, and ushered through a long dark passage into a courtyard, which presented a very striking appearance. In the midst, the usual fountain leaped and sparkled in the rays that, falling from a painted lantern, converted each drop of spray into rubies or emeralds. Mimosas, hanging their flowery wreaths, and orange-trees bending with their golden fruit, stood round; themselves shadowed by some tall luxuriant palms. On one side, many lights twinkled in the lattices of the hareem; on the other, rose a wide alcove, with fretted roof, and a raised marble floor. The divan was occupied by some gorgeously-clad Turks, some merchants, and two Armenian priests in violet robes, and high black turbans. A large painted lantern threw its coloured light upon this picturesque and imposing group.

The circle, except the priests, rose as I entered, and remained standing until I had taken my seat; then, resuming theirs, each laid his hand upon his heart, and, bowing slowly, muttered something about Allah. A pipe was then presented, and according to the pleasant Eastern usage, no observation was addressed to me, until I had time to become familiarized with the appearances that surrounded me.

My host was a noble-looking fellow, with piercing eyes and a long black beard; yet his countenance wore an expression of mirth and good-humour that contrasted curiously with that reverend beard and lofty look. A long robe of dark flame-coloured silk was wrapped round his waist by a voluminous shawl, and a white muslin turban was folded broadly on his forehead.

He led the conversation (through an interpreter) with great animation and interest to European topics, inquiring eagerly about steam, chemistry, and railways. When I

* "The Pilgrim's Porch."

observed that almost all our knowledge of chemistry and astronomy came originally from his country, he said that the Arab science was only like *water* when it came to us in Frangistan: "we put fire under it and turn it into *steam*. Ah, yes!" he continued, "you English know all things, and can do what you please; you know more of us than we do of ourselves."

After some conversation on medical subjects, he inquired very eagerly about magnetism, and begged that I would show him how it was done. Vainly I disclaimed any knowledge of the art; his enthusiasm on the subject was not to be evaded, and, at last, I consented to explain the simple process.

He beckoned to a black slave who was standing by with folded arms, to approach; and, as the gaunt negro knelt before me, the whole circle closed round us, and looked on in breathless suspense, while I passed my hands slowly over my patient's eyes. Suddenly, to my surprise and their astonishment, a shudder passed over his gigantic frame, and he sank upon the ground, huddled like a black cloak that has fallen from a peg. A low exclamation of "Wallah!" escaped from all the bystanders, who, one by one, endeavoured to waken him, but in vain. At length, they said quietly, "He is dead," and resumed their pipes and their placid attitudes on the divans, as if it was all quite regular. My host was quite beside himself with astonishment, and overwhelmed me with eager questions, to which I only replied with that invaluable Burleigh nod that throws all the responsibility of perception on the inquirer, and off of the nodder. The physician gazed in silence for some time on the apparently breathless black mass of humanity that lay heaped upon the floor; and then, with great diffidence and many apologies, requested I would bring him back to life, as he was worth nearly a hundred pounds. I was far from certain whether, or in what manner, this was to be done, and postponed the attempt as long as possible. At length I tried, and succeeded with a vengeance!

It was like a thousand wakenings from a thousand sleeps—long-suppressed consciousness seemed suddenly to flash upon his brain, too powerfully for its patient endurance. With a fearful howl, he started to his feet, flung wide his arms, threw back his head, and, while his eyes rolled wildly in their sockets, he burst into a terrible shrieking sort of laughter. He seized a large vase of water, and dashed it into fragments on the marble floor; he tore up the divan, and smashed the lantern into a thousand bits; then, with his arms tossed wildly in the air, he rushed about the courtyard, while the terrified Turks hid themselves, or fled in every direction. As I watched their horror-stricken countenances, hurrying to and fro in the various light of the moon and the remaining lantern, their long draperies tangling in the plants and pillars, their black pursuer stalking along as if engaged in some grim game of "blindman's buff;" together with the howl of the maniac ringing far and wide through the silent night, the shrieks of the women in the hareem above, the rapid tread of the pursued and the tramp of the pursuer among the palms and mimosas in the strange looking courtyard, the whole seemed to me like some fearful dream, of which I watched the result in painful and constrained suspense.

At length, the slave became exhausted by the violence of his emotions, and, flinging himself on the ground, sobbed as if his heart would break. Gradually he came to himself, looked puzzledly round on the scene of devastation he had wrought, and then quietly resumed his meek attitude, and stood with folded arms on his naked chest.

Peace being restored, the scattered audience appeared one by one from their hiding-places, the lantern and fresh pipes were lighted, and we all resumed our seats, except the Armenian priests, who had disappeared in the confusion. The negro was then examined, and he described his sensations as those of exquisite delight, but he was quite unconscious of all that he had done.

As I had preserved an air of quiet indifference (which I was far from feeling) through the transaction, the Orientals thought the matter was all quite right, and looked upon me with great respect. My host professed himself as much obliged as astonished by the performance, and begged of me to return the next evening to repeat the experiment. "Heaven forbid!" thought I, as I took leave of my host, as the following day I did of Damascus.*

* The celebrated sword-blades are no longer manufactured here. The trade was transferred to Khorassan by one of the many conquerors that have ravaged this fair city. The steel was "cut as fine as horsehair, and interwoven with gold as finely drawn as woman's tresses," then subjected to fire till each metal became imbued with the virtues of the other, and the blade would cut gossamer as it floated in the air.

## CHAPTER LI.

### THE MOUNTAIN TRIBES.

Rebellion, foul dishonouring word!
Whose wrongful blight so oft hath stained
The holiest cause that tongue or sword
Of mortal ever lost or gained!

MOORE.

And, with an Arab instinct, thwarted ever
By their Frank policy, and in its turn,
A Frank brain thwarted by the Arab heart,
While these remained in equipoise, they loved
Nothing; had either been predominant,
As the Frank schemer or the Arab mystic,
They had been something: now, each has destroyed
The other, and behold, from out their crash,
A third and better nature rises up.

*Return of the Druses.*—R. BROWNING.

THE people of the Lebanon have been in all times rebels to foreign powers, most loyal to their own.

Divided, and dismembered as they are, there is the material of a great nation among these various tribes: they require only peace to make them powerful—only power to make them free.

Want of union, the sundering of the fabled faggot, is their cause of weakness. To concentrate the energies and unite the interests of the several tribes, would require a powerful and enlightened intellect, and such has never appeared among them. Two of their Emirs,* Fakreddin, and the Emir Beschir, wanted but honesty and singleness of purpose to enable them to convert the populace of a thousand villages into a people. The former ruled from Tripoli to Mount Carmel, the latter was the sovereign, or at least the universally acknowledged source of rank and power all over the Lebanon.

Fakreddin, however, went to Europe to seek for assistance against his Turkish oppressors; he took advantage of a theory that had just then become popular, that the romantic history of the Druses had begun with the Count de Dreux, at the time of the Crusades. This claim on Christian sympathy, together with the rank, eloquence, and majestic appearance of the claimant, procured him immediate popularity, but the Chieftain of the Mountains soon sank into the voluptuary, and forgot the cause he had come to plead, in Capuan luxury. When, at length, he did return to the mountain, all his energies and resources were dissipated in selfish schemes of policy, and building fantastic palaces. His family, all of whom were Druses, became extinct about one hundred and fifty years ago.

On the death of the last of his line, the aristocracy of the mountain elected an Emir of Hasbeia as chief governor, and this dignity, under the title of "Hakeem el Djebal," has since lineally descended in the Shehâb family from father to son.

This illustrious family came originally from Shabba, in the Haourân; and are lineally descended from the Standard-bearer of the Prophet Mahomet. I could not learn from any of the Emirs the date of their arrival in Syria; they spoke of it vaguely as "several hundred years ago." It would seem that they came as conquerors, since they obtained large possessions with feudal privileges in the country about Mount Hermon, and the sources of the Jordan. Their castles and the villages dependent on them are named Hasbeya and Rascheia, both of which I have described in a former chapter.

The Emir Beschir is now the first man among the tribes. To him belong the beautiful palace of Beteddeen, and the sovereignty of the Lebanon. He was able, it is said, to summon 15,000 armed men to his standard at three hours' notice.

When the Egyptian forces invaded Syria in the late war between Mehemet Ali and the Porte, the Emir remained neutral for some time, neglecting the orders of the Sultan to attack Ishmael Pasha, and at the same time abstaining from any communication with the latter until he had possessed himself of Acre, and his cause appeared to be triumphant. Then, in an evil hour, he invited him to his palace, and professed himself his faithful ally.

Ishmael accepted the invitation, and so arranged his plans that on the evening of his arrival at Beteddeen, 15,000 Egyptian troops encamped on the hills around. The Pasha then explained to the Emir that he wished the mountaineers to give up their arms, and the poor Chief was obliged to comply. The Egyptians had already obtained by spies and bribery a return of all the arms on the Lebanon, and his troops, surrounding each village, now required the complement assigned, whether truly or otherwise. The Maronite priests, I know not why, exhorted their people to comply: the Druses resisted. This has already changed the character of these sects: the disarmed Maronites have become timid and unwarlike, the Druses proportionately bolder, and more free.

The Egyptians remain long enough in Syria to make a most favourable reform, and from this fact may be estimated the state to which the Turks had reduced it. The name of Mehemet Ali became a terror to the Bedouin in his desert, and to the Druse upon his mountain. Commerce returned to the seaports, security was bestowed on the public ways, mines were worked, crushing imposts abated. I am no panegyrist of Mehemet Ali's, but I

* Pronounced "Ameer."

think it only just to his character to mention these circumstances, which are universally admitted in the East.

It was only this forced disarmament of the mountain tribes, and the dreaded Conscription, that turned Syria against his cause, and enabled the languid and unwholesome sway of the Porte once more to establish itself in this country.

When England dispossessed Mehemet Ali of Syria, in order to restore it to the Turks, the aged Emir Beschir was brought to account for his unprofitable intimacy with the Egyptians. He and his three sons were ordered to proceed to Constantinople, where they have ever since remained under strict surveillance, with the exception of the youngest, whose reception of us at Beteddeen I have related in a former chapter.

The chief authority is now possessed by the Emir Sadadin of Hasbeya; the Emir Afendy of Rascheia is next in consideration. These families are both Moslem, though the Emir Beschir and his ancestry were Christian, which they became in order to conciliate the then powerful sect of the Maronites.

These Maronites derive their origin from Maron, a saint of the fifth century; persecuted as heretics by the Greek empire, they have long survived their oppressors, and preserved their own peculiar faith with little alteration up to this hour. It is true they have occasionally acknowledged obedience to the See of Rome; but the Legate is subordinate in power to the Patriarch, and their priests marry and celebrate mass in the Syriac instead of Latin. The Pope entered into this compromise with them, they refusing to learn Latin, but deferring so far to the Roman pleasure as to consent to use the old Syriac language in their masses, as equally unintelligible to their hearers as the Latin.

The Patriarch bears himself as despotically in his monastery of Canobin, near Tripoli, as if he still held his ancient rule at Antioch. Nine bishops and one hundred and fifty priests minister to about 150,000 souls. They have numerous monasteries, and are exceedingly ignorant and poor, but very tolerant. The chief Maronite districts are the Kesrouan, Djebail, and Katch Bukfaijet.

The Metoualis, or Moslem sectaries who follow Ali in preference to Osmar, are the wildest and least civilized, but also the fewest in number of the tribes. They do not amount to more than 20,000, and inhabit Akaleem, Sidon, Baalbec, and the mountains near Djebail.

The Druses are the most characteristic people, and their worship is wrapped in mystery. To them, the form of religion they outwardly profess appears a matter of indifference. If thrown among Moslems, they follow their usages; if among Christians, they adopt theirs.

The founder of their faith was a lunatic Caliph of Cairo, called the "Hakeem," who announced himself as the long-promised Messiah of all faiths. He, they say, was taken up into heaven; but his faithful follower, Hamza, was graciously left on earth to enlighten it with his doctrines. Banished from Egypt, he found a refuge among the mountains of Lebanon, where his creed spread rapidly. On his death, Moktana, his disciple, carried on the prophet business, and reduced it into order. He announced seven commandments, inculcating Veracity, Charity, Renunciation of Mahomet, Submission to God's will, Confession, Fidelity to their Faith, and acknowledgment that all other religions are mere types, more or less perfect, of this, the perfect one.

They were divided into two great classes and many sects; the former consisted of the "Initiated" and the "Novices;"* the latter, amongst others, were divided into "Nosairi" and "Quadrimousi." The Nosairi performed daily the most obscene worship; the latter are supposed to adore a golden calf, as the Persians do Ahrimam, the Origin of Evil; this calf symbolizing Eblis, the spirit at issue with that of the Hakeem.† The principal Druse districts in the Lebanon are called "Thoof," "Arkoob," "Shebhâ," "Garb," and "Mattu." They are also found in the Haourân, Antilebanon, and Jebel el Alah, near Aleppo. Their whole number may amount to 120,000.

However differing in creed, these various tribes are all under the same form of government; a sort of feudal aristocracy, consisting of Emirs, Mokaddems, and Sheikhs. These are each independent in his own district. The chief Emir, or "Hakeem el Wâpt," bestows all rank, and entitles a man and all his descendants to be Sheikhs, or even Emirs, by calling him brother. All the Emirs, whether Druse, Metouali, or Maronite, acknowledged the Emir Beschir as supreme, and kissed his hands. In case, however, of making war, the Emir cannot summon the dependents of the inferior Emirs to accompany him to battle; but must apply to the respective Sheikhs, or Mokaddems, who seldom refuse to furnish their contingent.

After the Shehâb family come the Bêt Belâmâ, whose ancestor was only a Mokaddem; but, having acquired a great reputation, he called himself Emir, and was confirmed in that title by the Chief of the Emirs. Next is the Resstan family, who are all Druses.

* Called the *Fawil*, or "interior;" and the *Teizil*, or "external."

† And the same that the Israelites worshipped in the wilderness.

The Chief Emir alone had the power of life and death, which is now monopolized by the Porte: the inferior Princes and Sheikhs frequently, however, take the law into their own hands, and no mountaineer would be found base enough to appeal from them to a Turkish Pasha even to save his life.

The Emirs are subordinate at present to the Pasha of Damascus, who has nominally the power, which he dare not test, to remove them.

The Metoualis, and the few orthodox Moslems in the Lebanon, are devoid of all feeling for the Divine right of the Sultan, and have no scruple in carrying arms against the "Vicegerent of the Prophet."

All the chiefs possess property and tenants; but there are many independent freeholders who, together with the tenants, pay all the taxes; the nobility and clergy being exempt. I have spoken of the industry of the people in a former chapter; I must also observe upon their fine, martial bearing, their freedom from many of the vices of the Plains, their tolerance, intelligence, and hospitality.

Some years ago, the Druses sent a deputation to our Consul General, offering to place themselves under the protection of Great Britain, to receive and build houses for our missionaries, and to send all their children to the Christian schools. The proposition was coldly received by Lord Ponsonby, treated with indifference by Lord Melbourne, and the chiefs returned to their mountains, affronted and disheartened.

The people of the Lebanon seem to have no idea of union, or any thoughts of Syria as a whole: their patriotism seems confined to each village or district.

I regretted very much not being able to devote more time to the examination of this magnificent country, and its interesting people. I would beg to direct the attention of travellers to the following subjects:—

1. To geographers, the Lebanon is almost a "terra incognita;" every information as to distances and elevations is of great importance. The source of the river Liettani is unknown, yet must be somewhere in the plain of Baalbec, or on the hills towards the Cedars.

2. There are two MS. histories of the Shehâb families existing, which would throw light upon the obscure history of this people. The Emirs Sadadeen and Afendy told me they knew of these books, but did not know in whose possession they now were.

3. There are two printing-presses on the mountain: one at Kisbeia, near Eden; the other at Mar Hanna el Shiveir, one day's journey from Beyrout. No copy from the former has ever reached Europe.

4. There are some curious ruins of a Greek temple between Baalbec and Zahle: and the ruins of a Roman city are to be found near Fakra, on the western declivity of Djebel Sùnnin. Neither of these have ever been explored, that I am aware of, by any person able to form an opinion as to their merits.

The traveller will also find a visit to Antoura and the Natural Bridge repay his labour well. They are only one easy day's journey from Beyrout.

These are all points on which I was unable to satisfy myself, owing to my limited time.*

## CHAPTER LII.

### BAALBEC.

——He saw the Sun go down
On that great Temple, once his own,
Whose lofty columns stand sublime,
Flinging their shadows from on high,
Like dials which the wizard Time
Had raised to count his ages by.
MOORE.

I WAS obliged to wait at Damascus until the English monthly mail arrived; so I sent on my servants early in the morning to wait for me at Zebdani. About three in the afternoon, after a parting cup with the jolly friars, and many warnings of my danger in going alone at such an hour, I started.

I pressed up the steep and burning side of the mountain, along the edge of an extraordinary ravine, through which the Barada, the ancient Pharphar, rushes from the highlands to the plains; thence, across a dreary, blasted-looking, mountainous country, in which not a blade of grass, of heath, or the vilest weed was to be seen. Naked red or grey rocks appeared everywhere, giving back the burning rays of the sun with interest, and shining upward into the eyes. But, in the narrow glen, through which the river flowed, all was beauty, richness, and verdure; a long waving line of poplars marked the course of the stream, as far as the eye could reach; these minaret-like trees, and the dome-like masses of the sycamore's heavy foliage, relieved against the evening sky, resembled a strip of some Oriental city. Beneath ran the bright river in a channel of emerald green, with here a foam-flecked mill, and there a vine-sheltered khan upon its banks.

Mills and Khans, however, and every other sign of social life soon ceased, and I found myself traversing alone a wild desolate waste, on which the sun went down in purple clouds.

* I am indebted for the principal part of the information contained in this chapter to M. Schultz, H. P. M's. Consul at Jerusalem, Colonel Churchill, and Assaad Yacoob y Kayat.

Here I lost my way, and it was long before I chanced to learn the right road from a goat-herd. When I reached the pathway again, the last light of day was vanishing. Every where I met groups returning to their homes, carrying their harvest home, or driving flocks; then the precipitous path became more difficult, the river foamed more wildly, the peasants became fewer, and hurried past me without wishing to exchange salutations with one who was leaving the haunts of men at that late hour.

The few villages that occur in this wild valley, and every trace of cultivation, seemed confined to the river-side. I passed some tombs curiously cut in the rock, which are said to have been made by the Jews during the Roman persecution. Thence, after passing over a beautiful bridge, I entered upon the Vale of Baalbec. I rode as fast as my wearied horse could travel for some hours; but at last the power of the spur failing, I was fain to walk.

A full moon shone upon the wild, wide, lonely scene, and made curious illusions with the rocks and bushes by the wayside, by which every thing imaginable, from crouching demon to crawling Arab, was represented.

My maps were with my luggage, and I had only a slight sketch from Arrowsmith's very inaccurate map to guide me over the waste. In following its guidance, I repeatedly lost my way, until a light on a far mountain side announced a village. Riding up to this, I found most of its inhabitants sleeping in the open air outside their houses. One of the women, waking up, very civilly directed me, and, after another weary hour's ride through fragrant lanes of gum-cistus and wild roses, I reached the pretty little village of Zebdani. This is consecrated by the pleasant association of being the spot wherein Cain murdered Abel, and here I found my tent, in which I was soon soundly asleep.

Zebdani itself is beautifully situated among clustering groves and rapid streams; but, on emerging from its friendly shade, I rode through a perfectly bleak and barren country, until I came in sight of the huge pile of the temple of Baalbec, with six light columns towering over it; it is situated a little to the right of the centre of the Valley of Bekaa. This vale is about twelve miles wide, and divides Lebanon from Antilebanon.

The vale is extremely rich and naturally fertile, consisting of a thick bed of argillaceous clay on a red sandstone. It is very partially cultivated, however, under the blighting influence of a Turkish government. I counted a herd of one hundred and thirty camels feeding together on one part of the plain; on others corn was standing, or being threshed in a very primitive manner, by means of small oxen drawing a sledge over it, as it lay strewn in circles round a harvest heap. A little boy stood upon each sledge, and seemed to be practising attitudes as he goaded on his lazy team.

I passed two or three wide and dry water-courses, with lofty cliffs of sandstone, and at length reached the quarries whence Baalbec rose. Numbers of stones, hewn, or partly so, are lying here still: one of them measures 68 feet by 14, and must weigh nearly 100 tons.

Tradition (and we have no other guide) says that Baalbec was built by Solomon in order to please one of his Sidonian wives,* who was a sun-worshipper. In order to raise this amazing pile, he pressed into the service numbers of the Genii, male and female, who were under his command.

The former built the walls, the latter carried the stones from this quarry; the vast block I have mentioned was being borne on the shoulder of a female Ginn, when she heard that her brother had been crushed by the falling in of part of the temple he was building. She flung down her load, which a is unnecessary to add no one has taken up since.

Baalbec forms literally a vast *pile* of buildings. Crushed, broken, and fragmentary as it is, it lies heaped upon its huge platform in magnificent confusion.

The platform itself seems as enduring as the cliffs of nature that it imitates. The rocks of which it is composed measure from thirty to sixty feet in length. No one knows by whom, or by what race of men this was built, but on it have been successively erected the Corinthian temples of the Romans, and the light, fantastic architecture of the Saracens.

High above this varied mass, tower six noble columns, upwards of seventy feet in height, that meet the eye of the farthest wanderer on this great plain. I know nothing equal in effect to their imposing array. Beneath lie strewn around, or ranged along the platform's edge, a vast profusion of broken masses of architecture, and some walls with niches exquisitely carved. The most striking view perhaps is from the south-east, where part of the magnificent portico still remains: and an avalanche of splendid ruins seems pouring from the old temple on the plain, as if its courts overflowed with those colossal columns, chapiters, and entablatures.

Beneath the platform run two vast vaulted passages, in comparison of which the Thames Tunnel seemed a mere sewer. And above, as you wander among courts like squares,

* Or for Belbeis, Queen of Sheba, or for his Pharaonic bride.

and aisles like streets, it seems rather to be some great city, whose ruins you are traversing, than the boundaries of a temple.

The original foundations seem to have been dedicated to the sun under the name of Baal: when the strength of zeal assumed the form of art and the Corinthian temples rose, the same dedication still continued under the name of Helios. Then came the Saracens, who preferred the ancient name of Baalbec to that of Heliopolis, and the crescent usurped the place of the god of day. Tradition whispers that Baldach, the friend of Job, inhabited this valley once. History is silent on the subject of its city and its temple, until the biographies of Antoninus Pius and Heliogabalus afford glimpses of its existence.

Baalbec seems to have risen at one time into considerable eminence under the Saracens, and even Burckhardt speaks of two mosques and a handsome palace as standing here in his time. Now, only a miserable village remains, and what is called a palace, belonging to the Emir Handjiar. He was absent at the period of my visit, enforcing the disarming of the Metoualis, by the order of the Pasha of Damascus.

Baalbec by moonlight is a sight to remember for ever. As I sat at the door of my tent, with my Arabs lying round me, their horses feeding by the side of each, I thought with regret that this was the last evening I should ever pass among such scenes. Henceforth my course was to the westward.

I had begun to love the climate, and the solitude, and the adventure that I found in the far East—the crowded world admits of no real retirement but that which is fenced round by deserts, and difficulty, and danger. But the red Indian does not range more freely in his prairie, than does the traveller in the East. No time, circumstance, or responsibility fetter his free will and action. He is despotic over his attendants, whose wild hearts are as reckless of danger and privation as his own.

Swiftly and silently he traverses strange lands; little rest is required for his desert-born cavalcade; little speech necessary for his few wants. He raises his hand, and his canvas home falls from the sumpter-horse upon the ground; the fire, the spread carpet, the light repast, all follow in their course. He waves his hand, they vanish; he points with his fingers to some distant hill, or mountain pass, and his people require no other direction as to their route: now sweeping the plains at a gallop; now loitering among the mountain glades; now bivouacked in a Moslem village, or mingling unnoticed among the crowds of some city, famous in the Arabian Nights. It is a strangely pleasant life, the interest of which grows on one hourly.

The following picture, which Sir Walter Scott pronounced as perfect, is as faithful as it is eloquent—

——— In the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his soul drank their sunbeams. He was girt
With strange and dusky aspects.

* * * * *

——— And at the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couched amid fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruined walls that had survived the names
Of those who reared them; at his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fastened near a fountain, and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in heaven.*

But I cannot hope that the patient reader would wish to linger longer among such scenes; and I must take leave of Baalbec. Now we have but the Cedars to visit, and then this pilgrimage draws rapidly to a close.

At sunrise I started for the Cedars. Hitherto its shadows had fallen behind me; now henceforth I followed them. Traversing the wide plain that divides the mountain ranges of the Lebanon and the Antilebanon, I turned aside to visit a tall, isolated column, that seems perfectly uncalled-for here, and yields no explanation of its present or its past. There is not even a vestige of any other ruin near it.

At the foot of the mountain, I came to a pretty little Maronite village, called Derr El Akmar. My people were some distance in advance, when I halted here to talk to some of the friendly inhabitants, and drink of a bowl of milk that was hospitably tendered by a Christian woman. As I raised it to my lips, an insolent-looking Bedawee, who was standing near, gave it a tip with his spear, which spilt some of its contents.

Now to avenge an insult is, in the East, a matter of duty: forbearance is inevitably attributed to cowardice by a people whose only law is that of force, and to retaliate an injury becomes a moral duty essential to self-defence.

I do not pretend to say that I waited to make these reflections, but I acted instinctively on their result. Emptying the remainder of the bowl upon the Arab's head, I swept my kurbash twice across his face and shoulders, not considering the terrible effects of its elastic stripes: instantly two large red welts started up from the skin where the whip had fallen. The Arab gave a howl of rage and pain, and, stepping back, blew the fuse of his matchlock in the intervals of his screaming. Some men and women threw themselves upon him, but he shook them

* From Byron's beautiful poem of "The Dream."

fiercely off, and, clinching his fist at me, he darted away among the woods.

The villagers being Christians, of course took my part, and offered their escort through the forest, where they said that the Bedawee was lying in wait for me. Declining their civilities, and distributing some little presents, I hastened after my servants as fast as the steep and rugged path would permit. At every interval in the woods I caught sight of that pretty village, several of whose inhabitants stood on the housetops watching me, and held up their hands in friendly telegraph.

I confess I scrutinized closely each cavern and grove that I passed by, and turned round more than once in search of my supposed pursuer, but I never saw him again; indeed, I soon forgot him in the wild beauty of the scenery by which I was surrounded. The pathway, as usual, took a mountain stream for guide, the simple engineering of the country taking it for granted that this impetuous pioneer would take the shortest course it could find from its fountain to the plain. And, in truth, she was a pleasant guide to follow, that Undine of the mountains; with her merry voice, and lighthearted friskings, as she scattered diamonds from her shining robes upon the emerald-green cloak that Nature, like Sir Walter Raleigh, had strewn upon her path. A rich and varied foliage made a grateful shade, and rustled in pleasant harmony with the bees that hummed among the wild flowers. Then would start up some high, projecting cliff, the summit of which, when won, commanded a wide view of the beautiful valley. So we went on, ever diving into shady valleys, or emerging on some rocky platform where the breeze blew free, and the eye could wander far over Cælesyria. Gradually the flowering shrubs ceased, the forest trees gave way to the pine or the prickly oak, and at last we wound along the side of a naked mountain, where our horses could scarce find footing. Then again descending, we came to a ruined village named Ainété, the cause of whose desolation we vainly inquired from a party of mountaineers, who joined us here. From Ainété the path becomes very difficult and dangerous: our horses even seemed to tread hurriedly and fearfully along a path that none but a lizard or a mountaineer would have considered practicable. Then we passed into a region of snow, and I looked my last upon the valley of Baalbec.

## CHAPTER LIII.

### THE CEDARS.

The trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may count them.

ISAIAH, x. 19.

The Cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone.

BYRON.

ON the summit of Lebanon might the first of men have stood, and taken his last farewell of the Eden that still bears the name of his lost inheritance: then, turning Eastward, his foreboding eye might widely range over the dreary world on which he was to wander, far from paradise.

Reversing this order, I took a last, lingering view of that great valley, and those distant hills, among whose gorges lay the path to Persia, and the Great Desert: then turned towards Eden, and gazed with insatiable eyes upon the loveliest yet grandest scene that the world possesses.

Gorgeous it was, and dream-like; so unreal and unearthly was the beauty of the land, and the glory of the sea and sky that lay spread before me. Eden was there, fulfilling every requisition of the imagination, as well as of tradition; and nothing but an Eve was wanting to complete the paradise.

Owing to the height whence I looked down, the sea, one sheet of molten gold, appeared to rise half-way up the sky, on which—so glowing was the whole bright West—the horizon was only marked by the sun's half-vanished disc, hovering between the sea and sky that seemed to have caught fire from his beams. The promontory of Tripoli, dark with woods, ran out into the bay; the shore swept thence with many a graceful curve and bold promontory, until it faded into distance on the far South.

Thence, upward, to the base of the mountain on which I stood succeeded vine-clad hills, and verdant valleys, and rich groves, and groups of cottages, and black precipices, in one richly varied mass. This scene was divided by a deep and dark ravine, through which the Sacred River, the river Kadisha, rushed and foamed. To the right lay a bleak amphitheatre of naked mountains, and in the centre of the platform they surrounded, stood a grove of dark trees—these were the Cedars of Lebanon.

I was at first disappointed in the appearance of these forest saints; I had expected to have seen them scattered along the mountain that they consecrated, each standing apart like a vegetable cathedral: but here was a snug, compact little brotherhood,

gathered together in the most social group; no other tree was visible within several miles.

When, however, I reached the forest, after two hours' steep and difficult descent, I found my largest expectations realized, and confessed that it was the most magnificent specimen of forestry I had ever seen. It was delightful to pass out of the glowing, fiery sunshine into the cool, refreshing gloom of those wide flaky branches—that vast cedar shade, whose gnarled old stems stood round like massive pillars supporting those ponderous domes.

One of the greatest charms of this secluded forest must have been its deep solitude, but that, alas! is gone for ever: some monks obtained the ground for building, and an unsightly chapel was just being raised upon this sacred spot. I confess it seemed to me like a desecration; the place already was "holy ground" to all the world, and these ignorant monks had come to monopolize and claim it for the tawdry and tinselled image which they had just "set up."

The churls had even pulled down great part of one of the oldest trees to light their pipes and boil their rice with: I fear, it was with a very bad grace that I gave a few gold pieces to their begging importunities for the erection of this sectarian chapel, and it was with a very bad grace that they received it.

There are twelve old trees, or Saints, as they are called, being supposed to be coeval with those that furnished timber for Solomon's temple—yes, twelve, I will maintain it, notwithstanding all the different computations on the subject, are there standing now. It is natural that there should be a diversity of opinion, perhaps, as the forest consists of about one thousand trees, among which there is a succession of all ages. Nevertheless, there is the apostolic number, first-rate in size and venerable appearance. The largest of these is forty-five feet in circumference; the second is forty-four. Many of them are scarred with travellers' names, among which are those of Laborde, Irby, Mangles, Lamartine, &c. I should have thought as soon of carving my name on the skin of the venerable village Sheikh, who soon arrived to pay his respects to the stranger.

That night's encampment was one to be remembered. My tent was pitched on a carpet of soft, green sward, under the wide-spread arms of one of the old saints. At a little distance, the watch-fire blazed up against a pale, grey cliff: its red gleam playing on the branches beneath, and the silvery moon shining on them from above, produced a beautiful effect, as they trembled in the night-breeze, and their dark green leaves seemed shot alternately with crimson and with silver; then the grouping of the servants, and the mountaineers in their vivid dresses, and the sombre priests assembled round the fire, and the horses feeding in the background.

Gradually the chatting ceased; one by one the inhabitants retired to their distant village; the salaams died away; and I was left alone, but for the sleeping servants. All was in fine harmony to sight and sound around me: all nature seemed in profoundest rest, yet palpitating with a quiet pleasure: the stars thrilled with intense lustre in the azure sky, the watch-fire now and then gleamed through the heavy foliage; its fragrance, for it was of cedar wood, stole gratefully over the tranced senses—

"And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer."

The next morning, before sunrise, I broke up my encampment with regret. These are the most interesting trees in the world, except those, perhaps, of Gethsemane: they were the favourite metaphor of the "sweet singers of Israel," and of the Prophets; and thus it comes that these few trees, standing on this lonely and distant mountain, are known over the wide earth.

Descending from the platform among the mountains where the cedars stand, we pass for some distance through a wild and uninhabited country, then suddenly come upon the beautiful village of Bshirrai, seated on a steep acclivity, where mingled lawn, and vineyard, and cliff diversify the view, and separate the cottages.

These last are built open towards the front, which is supported by wooden pillars that give the edifice a very temple-like appearance: and never did fanes rise in a lovelier spot; terraced gardens, and cascades gushing through thick tangles of the clematis, honeysuckle, and wild rose. The fig-tree and the sycamore shade the steep pathways, and by the side of these, comely women are at work in their open houses; some are making baskets of earth and straw, and drying them in the sun; some are embroidering, or making gay little garments for the laughing children that fearlessly approach, and allow you to lift them on your saddle, and play with their long, wavy curls. Round you rise rocks and precipices of fantastic form, and various colouring; and beneath, through a dark and grand ravine, foams and thunders the Kadisha. Little paddocks, with real grass, a rare production in these parts, and white cattle grazing there, repose in the hollow of the vale; and all around the eye

wanders in pleased puzzlement through the intricate beauties of as fair a scene, from snowy mountain above to deep blue sea below, as ever mortal gazed on.

But I must not linger here, for my goal is nearly reached, and but few pages remain to me in which I may still wander on in the reader's company. Yet often did I linger along that mountain path, at some fountain, to ask some village girl for a drink, though I had no thirst; or at some orchard, to bargain for some apricots, which a few minutes afterwards I threw away. The people looked healthy, happy, and independent. I passed through some potato-fields, and soon afterwards encountered a drove of pigs: pigs and potatoes! need I say this was a Christian land! or how instantly this combination recalled to my mind a land only less lovely and unfortunate than that which I was traversing!

I passed the convent of Canobin; some lime-stone hills, extremely rich in fossils; a grand old castle in a picturesque valley; and then emerged upon the shore.

About sunset we reached the river Adonis, on whose banks some merchants had already encamped, and here my muleteer halted, and declared he would proceed no farther that night. The steamer was to sail for Constantinople on the following day, and, as I had some business to transact at Beyrout, I was obliged to push on, leaving my servant to bring on the baggage-horses and the muleteers as soon as it was day-light. The muleteer, seeing me preparing to depart, conjured me to remain, if not for my sake, for his, as he should never see me, or get paid. He said the roads were at all times infested by banditti, but at night that the "bad people" came down from the mountains to meet the French and Italian smugglers from the sea, and that no person ever was allowed to pass their haunts alive. I attributed all this to Oriental exaggeration, and rode away. I soon discovered that my guide had spoken faithfully for once.

About ten o'clock I halted, for the first time since sunrise, at a small khan, to give my horse a handful of barley, and to sup upon some cucumbers and sour milk, the only refreshment the place afforded: then, resuming my way, I rode along a very wild and lonely shore, by the light of a brilliant moon. The way soon ascended along the brow of a dark and menacing cliff, which impended over the path so as to render it quite dark. Here I met four wild-looking Bedouins, whom, reining up close to the cliff, I allowed to pass on the sea-side, where there was barely room for their horses to find footing. I knew that at such close quarters their long spears were of no use; and they passed without, however, exchanging the usual salutations. The sea roared hungrily many hundred yards below, the path was rugged and slippery, and it was with difficulty my horse could keep his feet.

On descending from these heights, I found myself in a cemetery, whose sculptured turbans showed that the neighbouring village was Moslem. The silence of the night was now broken by fierce yells and howlings, which I discovered proceeded from a naked maniac, who was fighting with some wild dogs for a bone. The moment he perceived me he left his canine comrades, and, bounding along with rapid strides, seized my horse's bridle, and almost forced him backwards over the cliff, by the grip he held of the powerful Mameluke bit. A madman is not a pleasant opponent any where; but on a dangerous precipice at midnight, far from all human aid, he becomes the most formidable opponent one can encounter. I felt a scruple about shooting him, so I felled him by a blow of the butt-end of my pistol, and spurred away before he could recover himself.

A widely curved bay now revealed itself, and, at its farther extremity, I could see several low, dark craft moored close in shore; while lights, that seemed intended for signals, gleamed at intervals all along the hills. These were extinguished as I approached each, but were quickly relighted when I passed. I had wrapped my turban round my neck and waist to protect myself from the cold night; but I now re-wound it on my head, as the red tarboosh is the sure sign of a Turkish trooper, and could scarcely escape a rifle bullet in the scenes I was about to enter upon. As I approached a pass in the rocks, four mounted men, videttes I suppose, suddenly dashed out from their concealment, and reined up their horses when close to mine. "Who are you? whither going!" was quickly asked. "An Englishman travelling to Beyrout," was the reply. They held a moment's counsel, and then suffered me to pass, I know not why.

I rode in silence for about a mile, when I came to some tents. Camels were lying about, and bales of silk and other merchandize. A few men in Syrian and three or four in Frank dresses were passing to and from the boats to the tents. It was about one o'clock, the very noon of night; yet this was the hour of most active business. They had evidently been apprised that a stranger was approaching, and now moved stealthily about among the sleeping camels, and the bales that lay strewn around. There seemed to be some safety in a multitude; retreat was impossible, and I rode straight up to the

largest tent. Dismounting, I desired one of the Arabs to lead about my horse to cool, and then asked for a light for my pipe, and lay down upon the tent-carpet.

The scene was a very picturesque one; high mountains frowned over the silvery sands; the smugglers gathered round the door of the tent, their shawl girdles stuck full of pistols and yataghans, and the dew standing on their shaggy brows and moustaches; the tents, the boats, the bright blue sea, and a glorious moon shining over all, formed a picture on which I gazed earnestly, as it might be for the last time. I knew if they robbed, they would murder me also, in order that I might not peach upon their haunts; and yet under these pleasant impressions I lay smoking my pipe as calmly as ever I did under the shelter of the English flag. Three most sinister-looking ruffians after a long consultation now approached me. They all squinted violently, so that they might have seemed to have only three eyes among them, only, that each time I looked, I saw the eye in a different ball. These were now all looking in six different ways on the gold tassel of my sword-knot: at length one of them asked me, "what brought me there at that hour of the night?" and for a moment the reply rose to my lips, that I was come to make arrangements for buying silk, which would probably have at once secured me safety and popularity.

A moment's reflection saved me from making use of a false plea; those old crusading shores seemed to look reproachfully on the very thought. I said I was an English traveller, and that my servants were following me. The Arab shook his head; but, at that moment, a young Syrian entered the tent, and, to my agreeable surprise, accosted me in French. He said very courteously that I was not aware of the danger I was in, and that he would advise me to remain there till morning; "what guard have you?" he added, "or on what protection do you rely?"—"On the name of Englishman," I replied; "my country is known never to let an injury to pass unnoticed; if, as you suggest, I should be murdered, it will be known at Beyrout to-morrow, and a garrison will be placed here, which would spoil your trade." "Do you know," said the Syrian, "that on the road you are about to travel, a young Frenchman was murdered only last week? Be advised by me, and stay here until morning." "I am much obliged for your friendly warning," said I, "but I must proceed: the Frenchman you speak of was unarmed; *I* shan't die alone, you may depend upon it." I now mounted my horse, and, as I gathered up my reins, the three Arabs placed themselves in my path. I knew these people well enough to be convinced that my only chance of escape now lay in resolution. I said to the Syrian, "The first man that puts out his hand dies as surely as I live!" The moonlight glimmered on the barrel of my pistol; the Syrian spoke a few hurried words, whose meaning I could not catch; and the next moment, I was past the smugglers and out of their sight round a projecting rock.

To this moment I cannot tell why they let me pass without a struggle, and when I told my adventure at Beyrout, it was scarcely believed. I am inclined to think it was owing to my being quite alone; they could not believe that I had not some powerful assistance near at hand, and these people are fortunately as cowardly as unscrupulous.

I had still a weary distance to travel; and the broad stream of the Nahr el Kelb to ford or swim, as my jaded horse happened to choose the way, of which I was profoundly ignorant. The sun rose as I entered Beyrout and dismounted at my cottage just twenty-five hours after I had mounted the preceding day. The moment the saddle was removed, my horse lay down upon the sand; but, after a few minutes' rest, when barley was offered to him, he stood up again, and ate heartily.

I had just flung myself on my bed, when I saw the foretopsail of the Vernon cast loose, the signal that she was going to sea. I ran to the shore, hailed a fishing-boat, and got on board in time to take leave of my hospitable and gallant friends, and their noble ship, which had so long afforded me a home.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### CONSTANTINOPLE.

Is this the sovereign seat of Constantine?
Is that indeed Sophia's far-famed dome,
Where first the Faith was led in triumph home
Like some high bride, with banner and bright sign
And melody and flowers? Round yonder shrine
The sons, the rivals, yea, the lords of Rome,
Bowed they in reverence, awed by truth divine
Breathed through the golden lips of Chrysostom!
But where that conquering Cross, which, high in heaven,
That dome of old surmounted? angels sweeping
The aërial coasts now hang no more suspended—
With the wild sea-dirge their chants no more are blended—
Onward they speed, by their own sorrows driven;
And the winds waft alone their heavenly weeping.

AUBREY DE VERE.

I FOUND myself on board a Turkish steamer, with 850 troops strewed along the deck so thickly that they could scarcely turn, and walking was quite out of the question. The forecabin was allotted to the hareems of the

officers; the ladies' cabin was occupied by a Persian Princess; and two Persian Princes and I had the saloon to ourselves. They were very agreeable, courteous persons, and spoke with delight of their visit to England some years ago. The Opera and the "fire-carriages" were subjects on which they particularly loved to dwell, but the women of England were the supreme subjects of their admiration. "Persian ladees," said Prince Reza Oglu, "very beautifool; Constantininopoli ladees very beautifool; Engleesh ladees much very better."

We passed Cyprus the second day, a mountainous island, of great capabilities, but withering under Turkish oppression. Paphos, or *Baffa*, as it is now called, contains only the fragments of one or two broken columns standing upon a promontory, bare, and unmystified by the gloom of surrounding groves. Being in quarantine, we were not permitted to land, and perhaps, judging from the following quotation, it was well for us.

"The bewitching power attributed at this day to the women of Cyprus is curious in the connection with the worship of the sweet goddess who called their isle her own. The Cypriote is not, I think, nearly so beautiful in the face as the Ionian queens of Igmar; but she is tall, and slightly formed: there is a high-souled meaning and expression, a seeming consciousness of gentle empire, that speaks in the wavy lines of the shoulder, and winds itself, like Cytherea's own cestus, around the slender waist; then the richly abounding hair (not enviously gathered together under the head-dress) descends the neck, and passes the waist in sumptuous braids. Of all other women, with Grecian blood in their veins, the costume is graciously beautiful, but these, the maidens of Limesol; their robes are more gently, more sweetly imagined, and fall, like Julia's cashmere, in soft, luxurious folds. The common voice of the Levant allows that, in face, the women of Cyprus are less beautiful than their brilliant sisters of Smyrna; and yet, says the Greek, he may trust himself to one and all of the bright cities of the Ægean, and may yet weigh anchor with a heart entire; but that, so surely as he ventures upon the enchanted Isle of Cyprus, so surely will he know the rapture, or the bitterness of love. The charm, they say, owes its power to that which these people call the astonishing 'politics' (πολιτικη) of the women; meaning, I fancy, their tact, and their witching ways. The word, however, plainly fails to express one-half of that which the speakers would say. I have smiled to hear the Greek with all his plenteousness of fancy, and all the wealth of his generous language, yet vainly struggling to describe the ineffable spell, which the Parisians dispose of, in their own smart way, by a summary 'Je ne sçai quoi.'" *

On the third day we made the coast of Caramania; on the fifth we cast anchor in the harbour of the Isle of Rhodes. The city presents very much the appearance one would be led to expect from its situation and its history: a mingling of European with Asiatic dwellings: churches and mosques, spires and minarets, intermingled with cypress and sycamore; and without the town, a pleasant boulevarde affords shade for the varied population to saunter under, *à la Parisienne;* or to sit and smoke under, *à la Turque.* Here, also, we were prevented from landing, on account of quarantine; but I pulled round the harbour in one of the ship's boats, and surveyed the inner harbour, across the mouth of which the Colossus strode. It was only twenty-four feet in breadth, so that it requires no great stretch of the imagination to equal that of the image.

This island well deserves a visit, and has been hitherto very imperfectly explored. In the interior it is said to be very beautiful, and many remains of antiquity lie strewn about there, unexamined.

In the evening we weighed anchor, and passed along a fine, mountainous coast (Asia Minor), on our right. Patmos, on the left, with many an island of mythologic fame, keeps alive the attention that has henceforth no time to sleep; for every wave of this historic sea is full of memories. Scio and Mitylene now arise; the Gulph of Smyrna opening within this last; and morning's earliest light shows us Ida's Mountain over the level plain of Troy, with the tombs of Hector and Achilles appearing like Irish raths.

Soon afterwards, we enter the Dardanelles, against a current that continually runs to the southward at the rate of three or four miles an hour. This strait is generally about three miles wide, but sometimes narrows to half that breadth.

There is little that is picturesque in these celebrated Straits: the shores consist of steep and barren hills, with but few trees scattered along their sides. Their most interesting feature to me was the sloping roofs of the villages, which here, for the first time met my eye, and spoke of Europe.

The fortifications of the Dardanelles are very respectable, and they have some few guns that throw stone balls of two feet and a half in diameter. These guns can only fire in one direction, however, and, should they miss, the object of attack has sailed far

* Eothen.

away before they can be brought to bear again upon her.

In the evening we entered the little Sea of Marmora, which was throwing up as heavy a swell as if it was an ocean.

The next morning—the seventh after our departure from Beyrout—revealed to us a distant view of magnificent Stamboul; but we were obliged to bear away to the right to disembark the troops on the "Princes' Islands," where they were to perform quarantine. Their sufferings during the voyage must have been extreme, exposed during the day-time to a burning sun, and at night to the spray that constantly broke over the ship; yet they showed the same profound apathy in recovering their freedom, as they had done during their painful voyage. I never heard a murmur escape from one of them, though some of their officers remonstrated once or twice with the captain about their unavoidable miseries. These officers were, without exception, coarse, mean, dirty, and unsoldierlike: they seemed to belong to the very lowest class of the population.

After a long delay, while the arrival of the Princes was being announced at Constantinople, we were ordered to land at Kartal, a quarantine station on the Asiatic shore. I steered the captain's gig with the royal party in it, while a larger boat took their suite, and a beautiful mare which they had brought from the banks of the Euphrates.

And now I found myself floating on the moonlit Sea of Marmora, in the shadows of the minaretted Asiatic shore, with a fair Persian princess in my charge. I could not see her face; but her voice was as soft and gentle as the breeze that breathed through the folds of her long white veil. The princes sate one on each side of me, in high conical caps of black Astrakan fur, and a female slave, enveloped in black drapery, sate opposite her young mistress.

We pulled for many a mile along that placid sea, laughing and talking merrily. Prince Timour several times endeavoured to remove his sister's veil, and appealed to me as to whether the most beautiful women in England had any objection to being seen. The khanum * however, resisted the unveiling, good-humouredly but firmly.

The moon was shining brightly over the Princes' Islands, and mingling her pale beams with the golden haze that still lingered where the sun had sunk beyond the European hills. We floated tranquilly along under the shadows of the Asiatic shore, till silence gradually stole upon our senses, or was scarcely broken by the measured stroke of the sailor's oar, and the low, monotonous chant of their Ægean song. The high black caps of the Persians began to glisten with the dew, the veiled figures of the princess and her slave drooped gradually from their unusual attitude, the dolphins played about our prow, and phosphorescent light flashed along the crest of every little wave: the mysterious-looking group and every thing around were in harmony with the romantic scene and hour.

At length we landed on a tongue of land under a deserted palace, and spread a carpet for the Khanum, as the princess was called, at the foot of a sycamore. I lighted a fire of dried leaves and twigs, at which Prince Timour blew until his whiskered cheeks seemed about to burst, and the female slave drew forth from some part of her voluminous dress a little silver saucepan, in which we boiled some tea. This was handed in a tiny porcelain cup to the Khanum, and the princes and I made merry over the fire with the rest.

At length the luggage arrived, and we were admitted into the ruined palace which was to be our quarantine prison, with as many precautions as if we had come to storm it.

Travellers! avoid Kartal as you would the plague that it professes to be a guard against. I was shown into a large empty room, with discoloured walls, and a floor thickly covered with dirt and gravel, among which ants and fleas were swarming. The "royal family" had similar accommodations, and we had a narrow courtyard, with high brick walls, in common. We could hear the trees rustle in the gardens outside, but we were never allowed to see them; and we could hear the waves laughing along the shore, but never were allowed the luxury of bathing. Here we were detained for a dismal fortnight, half starved and half scorched, without any resource but our pipes and resignation, both of which my companions possessed in a much greater degree of perfection than I did.

At length our quarantine was ended; but I was informed that the Persian princes were under serveillance, and that I must remain with them until the Sultan's pleasure was known. Vainly I remonstrated — vainly threatened the superintendent with the vengeance of all the European powers: he shook his head, and resumed his pipe. I then told him that, having fulfilled all the quarantine requirements, I should wait for no permission, but walk out, and he might tell his sentry to fire upon a British subject if he dared.

Suiting the action to the word, I returned to the prison, took leave of the princes, put seals upon my luggage, and started, I knew not whither. The sentry stopped me; I shouted at him the only Turkish word I

* Khan, *prince;* khanum, *princess,* in Persian.

knew, pushed unceremoniously past him—and found myself upon the seashore. I do not believe that twelve months of captivity could have made freedom more delightful than did the twelve dreary days I had passed in that loathsome prison.

My first impulse was to plunge into the sea; and I was scarcely dressed when the superintendent came up, and, to my surprise, accosting me very civilly, apologized for my detention. At first, I assumed great indignation, but allowed myself to be pacified on a boat being engaged to take me to Constantinople, and all my luggage being carefully deposited therein. A janizary was sent with me, and I gave my parole to present myself at the police-office before I made use of my freedom.

I felt great regret in being obliged to leave the princes in their dismal prison. They had been very hospitable and kind to me during our imprisonment, and they now displayed a cheerful resignation to their fate that would have become a philosopher: their chief regret seemed to be that their sister was not to see Constantinople, for which she had travelled so far.

I understood, afterwards, that the Khan of Persia (who had murdered their father, by the by), hearing of their intended visit to Constantinople, had signified his displeasure at it to the Porte. The Sultan, being anxious to conclude a commercial treaty with the Khan, had refused to see the princes; and they now turned to England's representative for assistance and advice. It is unnecessary to say that Sir Stratford Canning afforded both; and I believe that, after some detention at Brusa, in Bithynia, these wronged and amiable men were received at Constantinople as became the descendants of Tamerlane.

After some hours' sailing, I came in sight of the European shore, and gazed eagerly for some object that might assure me of its identity, when, lo! slowly emerging from the bright horizon, minaret after minaret starts into view; mosque domes and masses of dark foliage follow; with every wave we bound over, some new feature is developed, and at length Constantinople stands revealed in all its unrivalled magnificence and beauty.

The Bosphorus shines before us like a lake; its purple waves dance into the sunlight that turns their crests to gold, and reflect along their margin the mingled foliage and fortresses that shadow their deep waters. Over these rises a richly-mingled mass of palaces, and gardens, and stately towers; and dark groves, with many minarets, and cypress trees, and purple domes, and gleaming crescents. Beyond that gorgeously-crowded hill the peninsula is girded round with the majestic walls and towers that so long defied the Moslem hordes.

The triangular peninsula which Constantinople occupies, is bounded on the south by the Sea of Marmora, on the east by the Thracian Bosphorus, and on the north by the Golden Horn, which separates it from Pera. This unique water is only a quarter of a mile wide, and runs, bordered by arsenals, palaces, and storehouses, for seven miles, into Roumelia. All the fleets in Europe might here lie at anchor among the very streets, like the gondolas on the canals of Venice.

The town of Pera occupies the whole face of the shore, looking down upon the Golden Horn, and out upon the Bosphorus: Tophana and Galata are involved in its general name. Here all the Europeans, with their respective embassies and consulates, have their residence.

I coasted along the Asiatic shore, until I passed the Hill of Scutari, covered with a forest of cypresses that conceal the burial-place of the city, and then steered across, under Leander's Tower, for Pera. This tower is built upon a rock, in the midst of the Bosphorus, whereon rested the central links of a strong chain with which the simple people of early times checked the course of the ancient navies.

So much has been said and written of Constantinople, that I shall only add that it seems to me impossible to exaggerate its beauty and commanding appearance. There is something so strange in those fairy-like towers and minarets among their rich groves and gardens, contrasted with the imposing situation of the city, and the proud array of castle and fortress that lines the shore, added to the beauty of the bright blue sea in which the city stands reflected, and the clear atmosphere that gives brilliance to the whole, that it is impossible to describe the effect produced by such various causes.

Landed at Pera, I passed a long examination before the civil authorities, and then repaired to Missirie's most comfortable hotel. It was a real pleasure to find myself once more in Europe, and the crowds of people with hats on their heads, and without moustache upon their lips, appeared very strange to me. I can easily understand the Moslem's contempt for, and dislike to, the shaven face: once accustomed to the majestic beard and the manly moustache, the human countenance certainly assumes a very mean appearance when deprived of these natural adjuncts. The unveiled women, too, seemed very surprising, as they wandered about the streets at their own free will, and for the first day or two I felt more inclined to ask a question of the courteous orientals than of the smart foppish-looking Frank. So much for custom.

The streets of Pera are steep and narrow, but otherwise strictly European in their ap-

pearance. Missirie's hotel would be considered excellent any where, but to a man who for nearly a twelvemonth had known no shelter but such as boats, khans, or tents could afford, it was absolutely luxurious. I found many friends here, moreover; and it was with some regret I ordered horses and set off for Buyukderé, the summer residence of our ambassador.

A gaunt black slave, mounted on a camel-like horse, preceded me with my saddle-bags, and we passed at a gallop over the wide, bleak downs that surround Pera towards the North. In some of the valleys were tracts of great richness and fertility, and some comfortable farmhouses and homesteads delightfully reminded me that I was in Europe.

After an hour's hard riding we came to Sthené, and thenceforth our path lay along the beautiful shores of the Bosphorus.

This celebrated water somewhat resembles the straits of Menai in its shape and windings, but is on an infinitely larger scale: its steep shores are mostly wooded to the water's edge, and an almost continuous village runs from Pera to Buyukderé. Occasionally this scattered array of cottages and palaces collects into a town, as at Therapia, where the greater number of the ambassadors have summer residences: sometimes it is broken by terraces shaded with trellised vines, or shady recesses among the cliffs, where the inhabitants sit sipping sherbet, and smoking their chibouques. Most of the women wore the picturesque Greek dress, and there was a sufficient sprinkling of oriental costume among the men to confer a very imposing appearance on these groups. Pleasure seemed to be the only business of their lives, every scene disclosed a garden, every building was a palace, or a fort, or a cottage ornée. On we went at a gallop along the shore, or above the hills, or thundering through the towns, except where some gaily-painted car, full of women, and drawn by two white oxen, blocked up the way. The sun's last light fell upon the Black Sea, as I rode into Buyukderé.

Here I passed two or three most pleasant days; which did not require the contrast of solitude, privation, and hardship, to render appreciated the gifted society and refinements of life which I enjoyed there.

Buyukderé is a very picturesque village, with green verandahs, and red-tiled roofs, and a pretty little quay, and other seaport appendages in miniature. Men-of-war, with flags of the different nations which the ambassadors resident here represent, are moored a short distance from the shore. These contribute to vary the view which reaches through a vista of high cliffs and fortresses to the Black Sea. Numbers of caïques are shooting constantly across the bright blue bay to Therapia; the vine-clad hills and grassy cliffs are mottled with the bright garments of the Greek inhabitants, and the whole scene is full of interest and animation.

One morning, I took a caïque to visit the Symplagades and the Black Sea: these graceful boats are the principal means of transit along the Bosphorus, as gondolas are at Venice; their bows are very sharp, and rise so far out of the water that only one-half of the caïque rests upon the water. Their sides are formed of a single plank of very thin beech, and are quaintly adorned with gilding and oak-carving; you recline on silken cushions that supersede all seats, and are thus shot along with incredible rapidity.

Rowed by two athletic Turks, I passed by a succession of bold cliffs and verdant valleys opening from the strait, with numerous forts close to the water's edge, and in less than an hour I was bounding over the waters of the Euxine. The light caïque leapt from wave to wave of this troubled water like a sea-gull, and it was with some difficulty we disembarked on the mass of dark and rugged cliffs that represent the Symplagades, or Cyanean rocks. This singular pile starts up from the sea to a considerable height, surmounted by an altar of pure white Parian marble. The view from thence is very striking, commanding a wide range of the European and Asiatic shores, and of that gloomy and turbulent sea so celebrated in the songs of the sunny Archipelago. The light-houses of Europe and of Asia serve to guard as well as to enlighten the entrance to the Bosphorus, and their strong fortresses add to the effect of the naked and bold cliffs on which they stand. Who raised the lonely altar on this wild island none can tell, but imagination will have it to be a votive monument of some rescued mariner in the times when Argo sailed these seas.

That evening we visited Unkiar Skelessi, an old fortress crowning one of the Asiatic hills. The sunset was magnificent, and the Bosphorus beneath us seemed one sheet of burning gold, while far away, over hill, and vale, and ruined tower, and broken aqueduct, the crimson light lent a new charm and marvel to the splendid landscape. Yet when the sun was gone he was scarcely regretted; evening came on with so beautiful and bright an aspect, with such diamond stars, and azure sky, and fragrant flower-smells, and softened sounds.

As we glided away, that grand old castle of the Genoese seemed restored by the doubtful light to all its strength; the hanging woods and beetling cliffs were reflected in the star-spangled stream; the air seemed exquisitely sensitive to the faint fragrance and the dis-

tant song; and it was like the breaking of a spell when the caïque struck lightly against the marble terrace of the Palazzo.

This caïque was beautifully appointed, and might have figured proudly in the wake of the Bucentaur. It had the same graceful shape and trim as the smaller craft of its kind; but it was richly gilded, and its lofty stern enabled the steersman to look over all the crew. Two janissaries, in the gorgeous Greek dress, sat in the stern-sheets; two servants occupied a space next the numerous rowers, and these last, dressed in light silken jackets, pulled with a swift but easy stroke, to which they scarcely bent. As the barge approached a Russian man-of-war, she beat to quarters, and the men remained with cap in hand, the marines presenting arms until the ambassador had passed by.

I do not attempt to describe the Bosphorus; Lady Mary Montagu's description of it is as faithful to this day as it is vivid. The stream runs at the rate of about four miles an hour, and is haunted by dolphins below, and "*âmes damnées*" above, its waters. These "lost souls" are dark-coloured birds, about the size of a teal, and keep for ever wandering with rapid wing up and down these straits. Their restlessness, and shrieking cry, and apparently homelessness, have obtained for them the above appellation. The Turks are said to believe that they are human souls in a state of probation: it seems strange that such a paradise should be selected for a place of purgatory.

My caïque shot rapidly away along the bright blue stream towards Constantinople; on the eastern shore, the "Sweet Waters of Asia" with the Sultan's palace claimed a visit; and the beautiful village of Candalie may not be neglected, if it were only in memory of Jupiter's adventure with Europa, and the deep allegory it contains.

Constantinople is a delightful summer residence, but the climate in winter is very disagreeable, and has none of those counteracting comforts that make us warmly welcome winter to our English hearths. The view from the burying-ground at Pera is the finest perhaps in the world: here all the gay people of the Frank city assemble in the evening, and wander among the tombs with merry chat and laughter; or sit beneath the cypress-trees, eating ice and smoking their chibouques. We looked down over the roofs of Tophana and Galata upon the Golden Horn, whose appellation the sunset seems to realize:* its waters are specked by many a caïque, and reflect the white sails of a hundred ships; beyond it suddenly rises Stamboul* itself, its richly mingled masses of dark foliage and white palaces enveloping the peninsula, whose point terminates in the Sultan's Seraglio, with its gardens. The undulations of the Seven Hills may be traced through the city that encrusts them, and occasionally you catch glimpses of the Seven Towers, the Palace of Belisarius, and the brave old walls. Over all rises Mount Olympus, connecting earth's scenery with the sky.

All these, of course, we visited in detail, but they are too familiar to every reader to claim description. The Mosque of St. Sophia, with all its spoils,† and the remains of such magnificence as led Justinian to exclaim, "Thank God I have been enabled to outdo Solomon!" scarce repays the trouble of procuring a special firmān, and the troop of guards that must accompany you. A mosque seems to me the most uninviting and prayerless-looking place of worship in the world: it is naked, altarless, tawdry, and dreary-looking. The Sultan's palace contains a bewildering number of apartments of quaint shapes and simple ornament; some are carpeted, some mirrored; there is no furniture except cushions, and a very few tables, in any of them; but the views from the windows are superb. Those of the Harem‡ look out upon the Bosphorus,

> ——— "whose waters roll
> O'er many a once love-beaten breast."

The other sights of Constantinople are so similar or inferior to those of more thoroughly Oriental cities, that I shall not run the risk of repeating myself by describing them. The walls of the city, which protect the peninsula on the land side, are by far the most interesting remains of ancient Constantinople. They extend from the Sea of Marmora to the Golden Horn, a distance of about five miles, and connect a chain of towers through their whole extent. They are divided by a deep fosse from another battlemented range of walls, which is surrounded by a moat and a sort of glacis. Mantling as they are with ivy, their war-worn fronts deeply scarred from the crusading and the Turkish battering-engines, they still present a most imposing appearance. Ruin has only made them

* This epithet was applied to it in the Greek times, and perhaps had some analogy with the crescent. In the East generally, the epithet "golden" is applied as a term of excellence; thus there is the Golden Gate at Jerusalem, &c.

* The Turkish name of Constantinople. When the city was taken by the Turks, its ancient name was forbidden to be used, and the country-people used to speak of going "εἰς την πογιν," whence *Stamboul*, they say. They *also* say it is called from Islam-bol, "abounding in faith."

† Among these are eight porphyry columns from Baalbec, and eight more from Diana's Temple at Ephesus.

‡ This word is pronounced *har'm* in Turkish—*hareem* in Arabic.

reverend, and left them all their lofty look. The road along their base was profoundly silent; on the left lay an extensive cemetery, where the cypress shadowed the Moslem's tomb with its sculptured turban, and the terebinth kept watch by the Armenian's grave. They say that this homeless people brought this tree with them from the shores of Lake Van, and now love to see those who are dear to them sheltered in their last sleep by its ancestral shade.

The cicerone affects to show the spot where Paleologus fell as became the last of the Cæsars: it is unnecessary; for every stone of that well-defended rampart is a monument to his heroic name. His was no mere animal courage—the wild brain-fever of the moment: he saw the hour of destruction approaching from a distance; he withstood the work of treachery and cowardice within, as bravely as the war of the Infidel without, the city; he had not even one glimmering of earthly hope to light him onward: but honour was its own beacon, and showed him where and how to die. Even in his death he was identified with the people he loved so well, and days elapsed before his body was discovered, so mangled that the embroidered eagle alone told to whom it had belonged.

We entered the city by a gate through which the Romans were wont to pass, and rode up to the palace of Belisarius, in whose courtyard swarms of women and naked children were harboured. The former tried to conceal their sun-scorched faces with some dirty rag, while they held up the other hand for charity, or strove to seize our bridles. Passing from this screaming mob, whose faces were the only decently covered part of their persons, we ascended by some ruinous stone steps to the palace halls, wherein Desolation dwelt alone:

"The spider hath woven his web in the palace,
And the owl hath sung her death-song on the towers of Afrasiab."*

The view from these mouldering walls is the finest in Constantinople, and probably in the world. There are nine gates or *portes* to the city, the most remarkable of which is the "Bab el Hamajoom," looking out towards Pera. Here sits the supreme council of the empire, and the appellation of government is identified with the Porte, which it occupies. In all oriental countries, the gate was selected as the place for administering justice, as being the most public, and the easiest of access. The Turks retained many of their ancient usages among the Greek customs which, for the most part, they adopted, and this is one of the most remarkable.*

We had a busy time of it at Constantinople. I found a pleasant party assembled at Missirie's hotel, and every hour of the day, and almost of the night, brought its engagement. Caïques and horses were in constant requisition, whether to skim the bright Bosphorus, or to scour the environs of Stamboul.

On Friday, we hurried down to the shore, to see the Sultan going to mosque, as a royal salute from the Seraglio announced that his caïque had left the palace.

Our caïques shot along swiftly, but the Sultan's seemed to fly. Twenty-six rowers, in silken jackets, urged each gilded galley over, rather than through, the water. First came a caïque, with a canopy of blue, under which a group of officers, in blue frock coats with diamond stars upon the breasts, sate all facing the Sultan, who followed at a short distance. He sate under a green canopy, beneath which was spread a wide cloak of dark green cloth, lined with *calico*. Four officers accompanied him, with their yellow faces turned towards his like so many sunflowers. A third galley followed, and this comprised the procession. A regiment of troops, in Turco-European costume, awaited his arrival, and a very respectable band struck up a wild air, which, I suppose, meant, "Allah, save the Sultan!"

He remained about half an hour in the mosque, when he mounted a handsome horse, and passing with his suite through a dense crowd, of which we formed part, he went his way. He is twenty-one years of age, and rather handsome, with a keen, dark eye, and brown moustache. He wore a plain blue frock coat, with a red cap and purple tassel. He stared at us as he passed, but took no other notice of our salute. There seemed a considerable display of taking care of him; but, evidently, the large attendance of guards, and the mystery maintained as to his movements, were measures of etiquette rather than of safety. Grand viziers seem to undertake all the unpopularity of the sovereign, together with their other responsibilities. They are often exposed to popular fury—the Sultan never. His divine character, as the vicegerent of the Prophet, adds considerably to his temporal authority; and, when the late Sultan Mahmoud found himself in a crisis in which no political expedient could avail him, he had only to unfurl the Sacred Standard (consisting of the unmentionables of Mahomet), the people flocked round him with devotion, and the janizaries were extirpated.

* Hafiz.

* Mr. Thornton, however, ingeniously argues that the palace of the Grand Vizier is always called the Porte, metaphorically, as the door of communication between the Sultan and his people.

Sultan Mahmoud was one of the five great men who have been the instruments of signalizing our age. He ventured on the glorious attempt which few have survived, and none have ever lived to see accomplished, that of regenerating a corrupt people. The attempt failed utterly, as regarded the creation of new powers and capacities: the old were destroyed; but there was no reproductive principle in the Turkish character. At the bidding of his Sultan, the Turk laid aside the external distinctions of his race, and with them he abandoned the sustaining pride, the consciousness of superiority, the elevating fanaticism that fused his patriotism and his creed into one great passion. His contempt for the Frank, whose politics, dress, and mode of warfare he has been compelled to assume, has reacted into respect and fear; such fear, at least, as a Turk can know: for they are a gallant people still, those Osmanlis;* and, though they feel that their empire is drawing to a close, and are resigned to the fulfilment of one of those strange old prophecies, like that which prepared the Yncas for the subjugation of *their* country, they will doubtless die fearlessly in defence of those walls so fearlessly won by their fierce ancestors.

* * * * *

Hurrah for the road! We dine far away, in the Forest of Belgrade, and a score of horses are champing their bits at the door of our hotel. Our fair countrywoman mounts a fiery-eyed Arabian, and starts at a gallop through the astonished town. Cavaliers—English, Irish, and German—away! Janizaries, surrajees, and slaves—Greek, Turk, and African—away! Two and twenty steeds are careering in yon cloud of dust. Master, slave, and freeman, are all jumbled together in the charge: some can't hold their horses, and others won't. On sweeps the galloping crowd over a fine, wild, picturesque country; now affecting to pause to look at some old ruin or rare view, now dashing forward at speed once more, till we plunge into a deep forest; and at length come to a halt in a beautiful green glade.

Here we found a sumptuous banquet, spread by Missirie's † care, under the shade of some noble trees. A fountain supplied us with clear water, and champagne flowed as freely, while the rich, juicy fruits of Europe and Asia assist to assuage the thirst. Then we scattered in groups about the forest, and enjoyed our coffee and chibouques *à l'orientale*, as we reclined upon our carpets and watched the sun go down in glory over that old forest. That spot, that looked so calm, and fresh, and fair, was dangerous to linger in after nightfall: fever and pestilence loved its shades as well as we: and we heard afterwards it had frequently proved fatal to belated revellers. We started about nine for our homeward gallop of nearly twenty miles. It was wild work, bursting through the underwood, in the doubtful moonlight, among those pathless rocks; yet our fair charge was ever first, and never drew her rein until the lances of a patrol, and at the same time the pleasant fire of a khan, induced a halt. As soon as the officer of the patrole understood we were English, he said it was all right. In any other people, such a mode and hour of travelling might excite surprise; but everything is conceded to, because everything is claimed by, Englishmen.

The next morning, at breakfast, the only members of the party who made their appearance were the lady and myself; all the rest were more or less affected by the forest fever.

I will not dwell upon the yachtings, pic-nics, and mountain scrambles, by which we became familiar with all the varied and beautiful scenery of either shore. Time sped on, and we all assembled at a farewell breakfast; for S—— and I were to sail that night for the Archipelago. Some complimentary regrets were expressed, which led to discussion as to why *any* one should remain behind. The conversation terminated in a resolution that the exodus should be universal; and forthwith, to the amazement and confusion of dragomans and lacquais de places, orders were issued for immediate embarkation. Passports were to be procured from the embassy, damp linen from the wash, half-made clothes from the tailor's, money from the bankers'. It was all done in time; and at four o'clock I had the satisfaction of seeing the whole party assembled on board the Maria Christina steamer.

We spread cloaks and cushions, and established a divan upon the deck: our pipes and nargilehs fumed and bubbled fragrantly and musically; and we floated as merrily over the Sea of Marmora, as the evening before we had glided along the Bosphorus, and made plans for future excursions in the scenes we had now left for ever.

The Hellespont looked much better by moonlight than when I passed it last, though a stiff breeze was blowing as we dashed along the rapid current.

"The winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy water,

* This is the name by which they choose to be called. Turk is an epithet of contempt, though they call their country and their language *Toorkey*.

† Missirie has been celebrated as a courier by Lord Lindsay and the author of "Eothen," both of whom have spoken to me in the highest terms of him. His hotel is the last comfort one enjoys in going to the East, and the first in returning from it.

When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave,
The only hope of Sestos' daughter."

The Grecian States of old and the modern Greek empire were assaulted from these shores; millions have crossed, and thousands perhaps have perished, in this stream; yet Leander's daring and Leander's death monopolize all the interest that the steamer's rapid transit gives one time to bestow upon the Dardanelles.

There are strong forts here that contain guns of enormous calibre: one is said to require upwards of three hundred pounds of powder for each discharge:* the shot consists of enormous stones of basalt brought from the Black Sea. Certain it is that this artillery is very terrible where it takes effect, but it is not adapted for shooting woodcocks or steamers.

## CHAPTER LV.

### GREECE.

What must have been thy nature, oh Greece! when, marvellous-lovely
As it is now, it is only the tomb of an ancient existence?

R. M. Milnes.

On the morning after sailing from Constantinople we found ourselves off the plains of Troy; whence we ran along the coast of Tenedos, and touched at the pretty little town of Mitylene. Thence we coasted by Scio, and, entering the Gulph of Smyrna, cast anchor off the town, forty hours after leaving the Golden Horn.

The beauty of "Infidel Ismir," as Smyrna is called by the Turks, has been much vaunted, yet scarcely realizes one's expectations of old Ionian loveliness. The scenery around the Gulph is wild, and wide, and mountainous; softening a little as it approaches the city, and becomes interpersed with the gardens and villas of the wealthy merchants. Smyrna itself is a commonplace, Turkish town, with dirty, narrow streets, and melancholy-looking bazaars. I had little opportunity of judging of the women's celebrated beauty, as we only remained here during the noontide hours, when all the fairer part of the human creation were carefully hiding themselves from the scorching sun.

On a hill commanding the city are some fine ruins, and the remains of an early Christian church. We are sometimes accustomed to think of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor as of so many distinct edifices, visible, and tangible; and many a traveller who would smile at being asked to describe the shape of the Church of England, or Ireland, or Scotland, has gone eagerly in search of each seventh part of Asiatic Christendom. Tradition consecrates Smyrna as the place where Polycarp suffered martyrdom; man and nature have well avenged him ever since upon the Smyrniotes. Earthquakes, plagues, and Turks have done their worst to this devoted city, but the elastic energies of commerce have still sustained it in its troubles, and triumphed over pestilence and persecution. The English almost monopolize the fruit trade, the French devote themselves to cotton, and the Dutch, who formerly held the principal commerce in their own hands, have now scarcely a representative.

The heat of the climate here is moderated daily by a fresh sea-breeze, that blows without intermission from noon till sunset, at which time we sailed. The next day found us in the Grecian Archipelago, with Delos, Tenos, and Syra lying round us. We cast anchor in the harbour of the latter towards evening, and landed on a rocky promontory opposite the town.

Here we were to perform European quarantine, and our prison looked dismal enough as the stormy evening set in, and the wind howled round the naked walls and desolate rocks of our dwelling. But the next morning brought sunshine and cheerfulness; our rooms were furnished, our books, &c., were unpacked, guardianos were assigned us, and the British Consul kindly sent us a file of newspapers.

We had three apartments, each of which had a sort of verandah in front, looking out upon the sea; we called these the "barracks," "the hareem," and "the monastery;" the latter was mine alone, but, in consideration of that privilege, it was also the refectory, and we fitted up a sort of divan in the verandah, wherein the lady's nargileh, or the masculine chibouque, were generally sending up their incense. Our guardianos were three hideous little old men, with unpronounceable Romaic names, so we named them after the Graces, and they soon answered readily to the appellations of Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne! By many other such devices did we seek to render our lives classical, but they were not very successful; facts were strongly against us, and a fortnight's imprisonment was an unfortunate introduction to the

"Clime of the unforgotten brave
Whose land from plain to mountain cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave."

The climate, however, is delightful, though

* Baron de Tott.

it never ceased to blow during our stay at Syra. The wind wailed wildly and mournfully round our prison, as in an English November, contrasting curiously with the clear bright sky, and the rich cheerful colouring that invests even the bleak rocky island with a beauty not its own. We look out to the eastward upon the island of Tinos, which assumes every hue in the rainbow in the course of each cameleon day: a deep purple sea, flecked constantly with foam, breaks against our cliffs; and opposite us, divided by a little bay, crowded with shipping, lies the town of Syra, its mass of white houses running in a conical shape to the summit of the convent-crowned hill.

At length our quarantine was finished; I almost regretted our release, for the perfect repose that it necessitated was very grateful after incessant laborious travel. I had come to love the rocks, and the bright sea, and the changing views around me, and nothing was irksome but the sense of confinement. Syra has since then ceased to be a quarantine station, which is now transferred to Athens, as a more convenient locality.

On the day of our release we rose with light to welcome liberty, and, breakfasting at Syra, were soon riding up to the summit of the lofty hill of which the island is composed. From here we had a magnificent view of the Cyclades, girding round the birthplace of Apollo and Latona, and picturesquely scattered about among those bright blue waters.

The next day we sailed to Delos, a distance of about fifteen miles: favouring breezes soon brought us to the island of Rhenia, and thence up a narrow channel to the marble pier of the Sacred Island, whither the religious processions of ancient Greece came to worship at the shrines of Apollo and Diana. The island, like all the other Cyclades, is destitute of trees, and almost equally so of verdure. Some shrubs grow among the interstices of the rocks, and in a degree relieve the eye, but it is to the brilliant colouring of their delicious climate that they owe all their beauty. It is impossible to describe the delicate and fugitive tints that invest every hill and valley in rapid succession; the sea itself is ever varying, and reflects their picturesque forms in green, or blue, or azure, as the sky's mood changes.

Delos is about three miles in circumference. Mount Cynthus, in whose recesses painters and poets have placed Diana, fatigued with the chase, or bathing her immaculate form, is about half the size of Primrose Hill. There is no spring on the island, and the sacred lake is dry; the soil is everywhere strewed with ruins, but it is difficult to identify the site of the temples. The amphitheatre is a noble monument of Hellenic architecture, and is as perfect as a ruin has a right to be. The island has been very little visited, and there appears to be a wide field for research amongst its varied relics. Our party was a large one, and consisted, moreover, entirely of English, a circumstance, which, I know not why, is always fatal to research, or even to reflection: a scoffing spirit inevitably prevails, and whether on the mountain of Parnassus, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat, our countrymen seem to think that everything is unreal except themselves and their sandwiches: this is the very triumph of objectivity.

The following day we sailed from Syra, over waves that might have seemed a shoal of dying dolphins, such various and beautiful colours played over every undulation in the exquisite light of a Grecian sunset. Then Dian's own bright orb rose over her native island, followed by Hesperus,

> ——"that planet blest,
> The lover's lamp, the wanderer's pledge of rest."

Brilliantly beautiful as are the days in this delicious climate, the nights have a loveliness that can scarcely be surpassed in that world of delights, which "eye hath not seen, or ear heard." The serene heavens above; the soft music of the rippling waves, with the lustrous foam upon their crest, and the purple shadows of their depths; the balmy airs, the storied islands among which you wander, give to the most blasé existence a poetry that has lingered unconsciously about the heart since youth, and which, when once awakened, cannot be very easily scoffed down.

All night I lay upon the deck, watching the dark ship rushing through the waters, and trailing after her a long train of snowy foam, bespangled with phosphoric stars. Then shone the Dawn over the far distant East, slowly revealing, as if it were a solemn sight, the marvellous beauty of that land, whose poetry first discovered her impersonation and divinity. That glorious mythology rendered Pantheism objective, and, in a moment like this, would have recognized the god of day rushing along the path that Aurora had so brightly spread for his reception. Now Night furls his starry standard, and retreats before the shower of Apollo's golden arrows: and, lo! upon Sunium's marble promontory stands revealed the temple of Minerva, the first fruits of his victory over darkness.

In such "a time, and clime, and spot," long years, with all their burthen, pass away from the tranced spirit; with a boy's glad heart, and childhood's enthusiasm, we gaze on the glorious scenery that surrounds us, as Argolis, Ægina, Salamis, and the Immortal Mountain start into view. Now the Acro-

polis of Athens greets us like some well remembered vision; and, rounding the promontory that supports the tomb of Themistocles, we glide into the harbour of the Piræus.

Down goes the anchor, and with it all sentiment, to the bottom of the sea. This renowned harbour is exceedingly matter-of-fact in its present appearance. Well-slated store-houses and offices of customs, and gin-shops line the quays. Commissioners from various hotels persecute you with most European pertinacity: and—by the shade of Anacreon!—there is an omnibus waiting to whirl you through the dust, at sixpence a head, to Athens! The smart phaeton in which we deposited our persons was not much better, but the coachman wore the Greek costume, and greaves embroidered after the most approved Achillean fashion.

The six miles of road that leads to Athens is one of the most interesting that one travels in the course of a life, notwithstanding the omnibuses, and the gin-shops, and the turnpike-gates.

As we drive along, we seem to recognize each feature of nature and of art, so long familiar to the imagination, until we rattle through a town which might escape observation at Islington, and finally emerge into a large open space, terminated by the shapeless palace of King Otho. This square is enclosed on either side by large modern houses, one of which, the Hotel d'Orient, is our destination.

Since Athens has been gathered into the European family, and restored to Christendom, it has become as familiar to the public as Edinburgh. It would, however, be too late at this period of my pilgrimage to affect fastidiousness in treading upon beaten ground, and this is the spot above all others on which I should like to linger, and, if it must be so, to take my leave of the gentle reader.

Greece is one of the few countries that I have an earnest desire to revisit, and yet, at every step one takes, there is an annoying—almost a painful—sense of incongruity between its present and its past, and, what is worse, a hopeless attempt to reconcile them. In Rome, the gradation from the older to the later time is almost imperceptible; the gods, temples, and ceremonies were converted to Christianity, together with the souls of men. The bronze statue of Jupiter became St. Peter, and Juno has transmitted her peacock feathers to the state insignia of the Pope; the Tomb of Adrian has resolved itself into the Castle of St. Angelo; and, more than all else, the vitality of Roman art connects the present with the past. Scarcely had the awakened taste of Europe begun to appreciate the beauty of the Pantheon when Michael Angelo exclaimed, "Je le placerai dans les airs!" and kept his word by crowning St. Peter's church with such another for a dome. Petrarch was crowned with laurel on the capitol without any apparent sense of ridicule; Rienzi ably acted the character of the Last of the Tribunes; Painting caught the mantle which Sculpture had let fall; and Raphael's pencil realized conceptions as glorious as the chisel of Phidias had ever wrought.

But in the fate of Greece seemed verified the pagan aphorism, "Whom the gods love die young." She passed away in the season of her triumphant youth; she perished in her pride; and, through the night of ages that followed, her imperishable name alone was remembered. Even in Cæsar's triumph, he "spared the contemptible living only for the sake of their glorious dead."

And now, a Bavarian king and an alien people are to restore the glory of ancient Greece! Verily, they seem like children playing at statesmen and soldiers, and no place will serve for their game but Athena's own sacred precincts. Behold the first fruits of resuscitated Grecian art—the palace of King Otho. Full in the sight of the Acropolis, in the same plain with the Temple Theseus, and in the solemn presence of that Olympian Jove, there stands a huge, white cubic edifice that would disgrace Trafalgar Square. Of the Piræus, I have already spoken. On the Hill of the Musæum, within a stone's throw of the Acropolis, there has just been erected an observatory, that stands in as hideous contrast to the Parthenon as Caliban to Ariel. Such are the first and most prominent objects that strike a stranger's eye, and they are characteristic of all modern Greece. No one can blame this people for wishing to become a nation; but their ambition to become *ancient* Greeks, and to make the Athens of Otho identical with that of Pericles, is fraught with embarrassment and difficulty.

Athens is rather a neat, little, modern town, with shops, and market-places, and porters, and hand-barrows, and horse-boys, and all that sort of thing. There are, fortunately, but few vestiges of antiquity enclosed within these modern walls, and the two most remarkable, the Porch of Adrian and the Temple of the Winds, do not suffer much from their position. The residences of the ministers of foreign courts form a quarter by themselves; and suburban buildings of truest cockney fashion are rapidly extending in all directions.

My first impressions of Athens, it is unnecessary to say, were anything but satisfactory; but when I walked a few hundred paces out of the noisy city, and found myself

in a solitude as deep as that of the Desert, I was appeased; the "religion of the place" came over me once more as I stood under the magnificent columns of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, "that plead so haughtily for times gone by." Few of these mighty pillars remain, and these are but partially connected by architrave and entablature, yet they form the most imposing ruin I have ever seen. The vast and massive monuments of Egypt are wanting in the majesty and grace which unite that beauty to sublimity, without which the latter repels, rather than invites or creates, the sympathy of the spectator. Around this ruin there was the profoundest silence, and it stood utterly alone; there was not a fallen column or a marble splinter there: the only living creature was a Turk, whose barbaric garb harmonized to my mind at least with the scene in which I found him. It was *his* ruthless race that had made Athens desolate; it was owing to *his* brethren that this Temple now stood in its imposing solitude, for their artillery had swept away all the modern buildings that once surrounded and encumbered it. Moreover, he stood there, the representative of those eastern hordes whom Athens had now, for the third time, expelled from her sacred precincts. In the days when Xerxes or Mahmoud planted their standards upon Grecian ground, the figure of a Persian or an Osmanli might seem intrusive, but now my turbaned companion stood upon that free soil, like one of the Caryatides of old, a monument of his own defeat.

Athens, the smallest metropolis in Europe, has for its suburbs edifices that have been a marvel and a model to the whole world. From St. Petersburgh to Washington, there is not an attempt at ornamental architecture that does not claim descent from some one or other of these immortal structures. I shall not attempt to describe them, but merely recapitulate a few of the scenes of interest lying within an hour's ride of Athens. From the temple of Jupiter we passed under the Arch of Adrian to the Lantern of Demosthenes, which is encumbered by hovels; the Choragic monument of Lysicrates, the Odeum of Pericles, the Theatre of Bacchus, the Odeum of Regilla; thence by a winding path to the Acropolis.

This was the great altar of the country, on which were deposited the most precious offerings of art that human genius ever realized. Its presiding deity was the Goddess of the Mind, in whose Phidian statue her own inspiration was divinely evidenced. This was the Minerva Parthenos, and overlooked all Greece and the outer world; while Practical Wisdom, or Common Sense perhaps, had its representative in Minerva Polias, whose statue "looked at home" and kept watch over the city.

On entering by the propylæa, the first object of interest is the beautiful little temple of Victory, which was built to commemorate the expulsion of the Eastern hordes under Mardonius; strange to say, on the expulsion of their Eastern invaders under Mahmoud, this temple came again appropriately to light; it was rescued from the débris caused by various sieges, and is now restored in all its pristine beauty to its original site.

The first object that strikes one after passing this little fane is the tall Frank Tower whose removal has been so much debated. Notwithstanding its heterogeneous appearance, it would be much missed; its effect at a little distance is excellent, and its removal would leave a blank which there is nothing to fill up.

The Parthenon occupies the Southern side of the Acropolis, but seems to pervade it all, as it were, with its own surpassing beauty, and to monopolize that natural altar, so that all its other temples seem subservient to that one. It is admirably chaste, as becomes its virginal dedication; but the friezes that surmount the simplicity of those columns contain the most exquisite sculpture in the world. This temple has been repaired as far as its own ruins afforded materials, but no substitute can supply their place where wanting. What a proud tribute to ancient art is this impossibility to restore what Time or Lord Elgin has removed; it reminds one of the genii-built palace of Aladdin, wherein one window was left unfinished, which all the wealth and art of the East was unable to make equal to the others.

The work of renovation still goes on, but scantily through want of funds; meanwhile, the scaffoldings, and prepared materials, and assorted fragments, give the Acropolis the appearance of something between a mason's yard and a museum.

The view from hence is magnificent: it is not merely that the features of the scenery around are as beautiful as they are eloquent with a thousand memories; but the climate invests all nature with such varied and exquisite colouring, as one only sees in the sunset landscapes of "cloudland" in these northern latitudes. The scanty stream of the Cephisus, the heathy mountain of Hymettus, the barren summit of Pentelicus, the olive-groves, the grassy plains, the distant sea, all are invested with a marvellous light, as gorgeous as a painted window, yet delicate as the complexion of a changing cheek.

We will not linger on the Hill of the Musæum, or even on that of the Nymphs, but let us pause a moment on the Pnyx, whence all oratory derives its models, as

architecture does from the Acropolis. The Bema, from which Demosthenes thundered against Macedon, might be taken for an altar but for its tradition. It is hewn out of the solid rock, and surrounded by steps, on which sate the Prytanes—the Athenian house of lords. Beneath is a platform capable of containing 5,000 men—the commons of the old Republic. The Bema, whence the orators harangued the people, commanded in very ancient times a wide view of earth and sea; but the thirty tyrants, fearing the powerful appeals to freedom and to Salamis that its position suggested and gave effect to, had it cut down to its present elevation, which looks only upon Athens and the surrounding plain; it was from this last, however, that Demosthenes hurled those "winged words," more terrible to Philip than the swords that they evoked.

What a strange, glorious, contemptible, capricious, people were those old Athenians! —now like gods, arming themselves for Marathon, or abandoning their worshipped Athens for the "wooden walls" that fought round Salamis; now like children, intoxicated with success, or prostrated by defeat; swayed by the meanest passions of jealousy and avarice; banishing an Aristides, robbing friendly colonies, and leaving a Miltiades to die in chains.

Yet, let us not forget all we owe to this wonderful people; "how much more has the little peaceful Athens done for the world than that raging giant Rome!"* The earliest and brightest associations of the young heart are connected with the name of Greece. In her sublime story the boy first finds his task become an inspiration; under its spell heroic instincts become developed, patriotism becomes devotion, and the love of Freedom a quenchless passion.

If Greece accomplished the most heroic deeds, her eloquent language first rendered them immortal; justly the statue of the goddess of the Mind stood supreme among the monuments of Freedom's and of Greece's triumphs; for the orator first inspired, and the historian recorded them—in itself another inspiration. It was Grecian poets who first perceived and translated to the world its own exquisite beauty; and to her sculptors it was first revealed that there slept, enveloped in the Parian marble, those ideal forms of grace, and strength, and loveliness, which it required but their chisel to discover and awaken.

A rugged rocky eminence rises between the Pnyx and the Acropolis; this is the Areopagus, whereon Paul preached with power on the very throne of eloquence, and denounced idolatry in the midst of idols. With a mythology that made deities as numerous as the attributes of the Creator, how mournful and full of meaning was that Athenian altar "to the unknown God!"

We descend to a lower platform, whereon stands the Temple of Theseus, which Time seems to have swept over with his wing, and not his scythe. Indeed, at a little distance it is scarcely distinguishable from its imitation in Edinburgh, except by the delicate "neutral tint" that has stolen over its once white marble.

The Cephissus, which formerly arrested the march of the Persian army, now trickles languidly along its shrunken course; the Ilyssus exists no longer, but a torrent-like line of oleanders seems to fill its course with verdant waves and rosy foam. The olive and the fig-tree have almost disappeared, and the hills are naked, except where the Hymettus heath still blossoms for its bees. These hills were once thickly covered with wild wood, and would soon be so again, but that the peasants burn them down in order to apply their ashes to their exhausted soil.

Modern Greece appeared to me to be full of promise, notwithstanding her factious people, and her puerile king. Otho was doubtless a most unfortunate choice, as monarch of an infant state; and it is said that King Leopold now deeply repents not having accepted the offer of the throne of Greece. With his talents, his experience, and his moderation, he might have already found himself the king of a great people, and might perhaps have bequeathed to his successors the empire of the Palæologi.

The present sovereign of Greece does not seem possessed of one kingly quality. Educated with a view to a cardinal's hat, his jesuit tutors are not perhaps responsible for his royal acquirements, but Europe has already had fearful instances of the result of such an education. Until the late revolution, Otho was the most despotic monarch in Christendom; of the parliament so long promised and so solemnly guaranteed, there was no trace; the council was composed of his creatures, whose tenure of office depended on his will; Bavarians monopolized every place of trust, honour, or emolument; all claims of service established in the War of Independence were set at nought; and those who ranked as princes in the tented field found themselves undistinguished and unnoticed at the court of the monarch whom they had placed upon the throne.

The two great national mortgages afford no interest to the bondholders; Rothschild only secures *his* repayment by the guarantee of the three great powers. The civil list amounts to about £36,000 per annum, and

* Jean Paul Richter

the king retains his Bavarian apanage of £7,000 a-year.

The population of Greece does not amount to above 900,000 souls, and this, notwithstanding the fecundity of the people, is daily diminishing, owing to emigration. When the independence of Greece was first declared, numbers of Fanariot (or Constantinopolitan) Greeks repaired to their own country, but, finding the despotism and oppression there more galling than in the Turkish provinces, they returned hastily to the Sultan's rule.

There are about 12,000,000 of acres contained within the boundaries, as defined by the three great Powers; of these more than half are comprised in the Morea. It is computed that 5,000,000 of people could find ample subsistence in this highly-favoured country, if its resources were fairly developed. There is not a landed proprietor in Greece worth £500 a year: the revenues of the church were all confiscated in the revolution, and the clergy are at present poorly paid by the government, or rather by the king. Some Englishmen have settled in the Negropont and other parts of Greece, but, owing to the taxes and other drawbacks, they do not receive above one-and-a-half per cent. on their purchase-money.

The people are sober, intelligent, and easily governed: their passion is for constitutional rights and education. It is very interesting to observe their zeal for their native literature and their anxiety to restore their language to its ancient purity. The schools are eagerly filled by hundreds of little Demostheneses, Miltiadeses, Aspasias, and other immortal names.

Mr. and Mrs. Hill, American episcopal missionaries, have done more for Greece than all the Philhellenes put together; the scriptures, and the leading doctrines of the Christian faith, are taught without reference to any particular creed, and this mode of education is unopposed by any party.*

A handsome university has been erected at Athens, and endowed by public subscription; but the king, as usual, laid hands upon it, and appropriated all the patronage to himself. It is interesting to observe the endeavours that Greece has always made, through all her disadvantages, to cultivate that literature to which her poverty-stricken people still fondly cling as by an instinct. Joannina was famous for its schools one hundred years ago, under Methodius, and recently, "under Athanasius, Psalida, and Valano."† Daniel of Patmos had a school of repute in that island; and Scio and Athens have preserved their colleges through all the disastrous vicissitudes of Turkish rule and civil war.

A late ingenious and philosophic traveller has observed that regenerated Greece "is but a pensioner of the culture which the rest of Europe has learned by long labour and the friction of ages. . . . Nothing they have learnt, nothing they have to learn, is their own." Surely, in applying themselves to the oratory, poetry, and philosophy of the West, they but reclaim their own. To them we were indebted for our first, best, intellectual culture; and if we can give it back to them with interest, after the lapse of ages, they may fairly claim it as an honourable debt.

It seems to me that Greece has never received sufficient credit for her gallant and successful struggle against her Turkish oppressors: it was the most heroic strife of modern times, and is only to be compared to that now carried on by the brave Circassians, to whom may Heaven vouchsafe a like successful issue. Under the Turkish domination the Greeks consisted of the warrior people of the Hills, and the trampled serfs of the Plain. The former never have been conquered, though assailed in turn by the Byzantine, Catalan, Venetian, and Osmanli. If the blood of ancient Greece does not flow in their veins, her spirit is alive in their hearts, and many a battle scene of the late fight for freedom displayed the classic character, as well as the heroism, of the men of Thermopylæ and Marathon.

When Missolonghi was beleaguered by the Turkish forces, Marco Botzaris commanded a garrison of about twelve hundred men, who had barely fortifications enough to form breastworks. Intelligence reached the Greek leaders that the Egyptian army, under Ismail Pasha, was about to form a junction with the formidable besieging host. A parade was ordered: the garrison, "faint and few, but fearless still," scarcely amounted to one thousand men. Marco Botzaris told them of the destruction that impended over Missolonghi, proposed a sortie, and announced that it should consist only of volunteers, as the expedition was a "forlorn hope." Volunteers! —the whole garrison stepped forward as one man, and demanded the post of honour and of death. "I will only take the Thermopylæ number," said their leader, and selected the three hundred who were nearest to him.

In the dead of night this devoted band marched out in six divisions, and placed themselves, in profound silence, round the Turkish camp. Their orders were simply—"When you hear my bugle blow, seek me in the Pasha's tent."

* The Honourable Mrs. Dawson Damer, in her lively and spirited "Diary," has some interesting notices of these schools, which were closed when I was at Athens.

† Quarterly Review, vol. 23, p. 357.

Marco Botzaris, disguised as an Albanian bearing despatches to the Pasha from the Egyptian army, passed unquestioned through the Turkish camp, and was only arrested by the sentinels round the Pasha's tent, who informed him that he must wait till morning. Then wildly through the stillness of the night that bugle blew: faithfully it was echoed from without; and the war-cry of the avenging Greek broke upon the startled Moslem's ear. From every side that terrible storm seemed to burst at once: shrieks of agony and terror swelled the tumult; the Turks fled in all directions; and the Grecian leader was soon surrounded by his comrades. Struck to the ground by a musket-ball, he had himself raised on the shoulders of two Greeks, and thus supported, he pressed on the flying enemy. A bullet pierced his brain in the moment of his triumph, but Missolonghi was saved, the delivery of Greece begun.

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Shortly afterwards, Missolonghi was again beleaguered; all hope of successful resistance had vanished. The small remnant of the garrison, placing their wives and children in their centre, cut their way at midnight through the Turkish army and escaped to the mountains. The aged, and wounded, and infirm, alone remained with some women and children. These assembled round the powder-magazine, and calmly waited

"Till morning's dawn
Should rise, and give them light to die."

At the first dawn, the Turks stormed the now almost defenceless fortifications, received one faint volley from the Greeks, and rushed on to the work of slaughter. A wounded veteran smiled grimly as he saw them come; with one hand he beckoned them on, with the other he fired his pistol into the powder-magazine. The explosion annihilated friend and foe: the remains of the heroic garrison perished, but, Samson-like, they involved their enemies in their own destruction. The name of Missolonghi, destroyed, but *thus* destroyed, became a tower of strength to the Grecian cause.

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One more anecdote, and I have done. A detachment of one hundred Greeks was hemmed in by a division of the Turkish army in one of the defiles of the Morea. They were summoned to surrender, but they demanded to be allowed to march away with all the honours of war. This was of course refused. Night was drawing on, and the attack was postponed till the following morning. One Greek alone passed over to the Turks; he bore a commission from his comrades to tell their countrymen that they had died in the cause of Greece. When morning rose, the Pasha found that they had thrown up a breastwork and presented a very formidable appearance. He then offered them a free passage if they would lay down their arms. "It is too late," said their leader to the aide-de-camp. "Go tell your general how you found us." They had unwound their silken sashes, and firmly bound themselves to each other, limb to limb, so that their line must remain unbroken even in death. The onslaught took place: seven hundred Turks fell before the last Greek was sabred; and an English officer told me that long afterwards he had gone to see the spot, and found the bleached skeletons of that gallant band still bound together by each silken sash.

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I only mention these anecdotes as illustrative of the spirit of that war: similar instances of self-devotion frequently took place; and the daring of the Greek sailor was no less conspicuous than that of the Kleft and Palikar.

Palikar (or hero) was the appellation of the members of the Armatoli. This was a militia of mountaineers, established by the Byzantine Emperors, and self-constituted and continued under the Ottoman empire. Greece, exclusive of the Morea, was divided into seventeen Armatoliks: the leaders of each band were called Protopalikari. Kleft (or robber) was considered a proud title: it was assumed by those who preferred open rebellion and a marauding life to a peaceable subjection under their Turkish invaders: they had no home, except some place of rendezvous; they were active, hardy, enduring, and pious, after their fashion.

It was feared that these wild mountaineers would prove very difficult and dangerous to control, when their lawless habits were forced to give way to civilization and order. They have proved, however, to be far better materials for a people than was expected; and as in war they displayed a firmness, so in peace they display an energy and industry, far superior to that of the people of the plains.

It is to be remembered that Greece, with a male population amounting scarcely to the number of the Sultan's army, disunited, ignorant of the art of war, without money,* resources, or assistance, defeated the forces of the Ottoman and Egyptian army, and

* It is a melancholy task to study the transactions of the Philhellenes; so proud in professions, so corrupt in pecuniary transactions, so dastardly or imbecile in the field. Greece, throughout her struggle, found in her foreign allies rather an element of weakness than of strength. There were, however, a few noble exceptions.

wrested freedom from their powerful oppressor. This is all that History will remember: she will cast away the petty details of jealousy, treason, and peculation, that probably darkened the day of Marathon as well as that of Missolonghi; and only tell that Greece, after the lapse of three and twenty centuries, vindicated the glorious fame and freedom of the past.

Until September 23rd, 1843, Greece exhibited a tyranny as despotic as any in the East: patiently and perseveringly she had striven to obtain from her Bavarian king the freedom so hardly wrung from a Moslem oppressor. Otho turned a deaf ear to such meek remonstrance. The Great Powers declined to interfere between the Grecian people, and the Prince who had been their liberal and only contribution to the welfare of this restored member of the European family.

Then the Athenian people rose; not with the fierce, impetuous passion that might have been expected from their excitable and injured race; but calmly, sternly, and irresistibly. Lord Charlemont has observed that a revolution will always be more or less sanguinary, as the people are more slavish or more civilized; and thus it was at Athens. The songs of Harmodias and Aristogeiton had been often chanted in the streets; but no word of vengeance is now spoken, as the Grecians gather at midnight round Otho's palace. Revenge is merged in a far higher purpose: they are met as slaves; before they separate, they will be free. The king sends to inquire the cause of their assembling: his aide-de-camp finds the palace is surrounded by a line of bayonets, beyond which the dark masses of the people gather in silence.

"What do you want?" was the simple question asked.

"A constitution;" was the brief reply, as Calerges placed in the aide-de-camp's hand the following requisition: "That the States-General be summoned; that the Bavarians be banished the kingdom; that the ministry be dismissed."

The people await their answer in profound silence. At length the aide-de-camp reappears, and informs the assembly "that his majesty requires two months to consider their demands."—"Within two *hours*, sir," replied Calerges, "we must have the king's decision. We have no wish to harm his person, should he refuse: he shall be escorted in all honour to the Piræus, where a ship is prepared for his reception: should he accede to our demands, he is still our sovereign, and we his loyal subjects."

The ordonnance was signed.

It is worthy of remark, that though Sir Edmund Lyons had been in disfavour at a court in which his manly and straightforward character prevented him from being popular, he was sent for immediately by the king, on the outbreak of the revolution; and I imagine that its final adjustment was not a little owing to the sagacity and firmness of the British minister.

This revolution took place a few days after I left Athens. Whilst I remained there, the king and queen drove or rode out, without any guards, every evening at sunset. The former, though far from handsome, looked well in the beautiful Greek dress, and carefully returned the salute of every citizen. The latter has a fine figure and commanding presence. It is said that, when a child, she used to pore with delight over the romantic history of Greece, and long to visit a country which had deeply impressed her imagination. Time sped on, and brought Otho and his crown to her feet.*

The chief object of attraction, however, in the royal cavalcade, was Mademoiselle Botzaris, daughter of the hero of Missolonghi. She is maid of honour to the queen, and one of the most beautiful women in Europe. The simplicity of her dress, which consisted of an English riding-dress and the crimson cap of her country, served to set off her classic beauty to advantage.

The Greeks are the handsomest race of men I have ever seen, while their women are very much the reverse. The dress of the former, together with their graceful, manly bearing, contributes much to the imposing effect of their appearance. They wear a crimson cap, with a long blue tassel, a purple or dark green jacket over a richly embroidered waistcoat, a very voluminous white kilt descending below the knee, and tightly girded round the waist with a Syrian scarf; embroidered greaves complete the costume.

The newspapers, advertisements, public regulations, and all official documents, are written in classic Greek; the language of the people is making vigorous efforts to attain to its pristine purity, and nothing can exceed the desire of the people of all ages for education.

When the Roman empire was transferred to Byzantium, the emigrants strove to dignify their new localities with old names and associations. Thus the metropolitan province was called Romelia, the language Romaic, and the trifling undulations of the city the Seven Hills. The Greece that is now reappearing goes at once to the fountain-head of history, and seeks to unite herself to her glorious youth. When I first found myself at Athens, this aspiration appeared to me as hopeless in its end, as ridiculous in its means.

* The King is a Roman Catholic, the Queen a Lutheran, and the children (should they have any) are to be educated in the ritual of the Greek Church.

The more I saw and heard, however, the less visionary appeared to be that hope; and I left Athens with the belief that the Cross might replace the Crescent on the dome of St. Sophia's, before another generation shall have passed away.

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My last evening at Athens was come, and I repaired to the ruins of Jupiter's Temple, when the magical glow of a Grecian sunset was bathing those immortal hills in a violet or purple light, that slowly and imperceptibly alternated on height or glen. The majestic columns of the Temple towered into the ambrosial air, pale but flushed with the deep radiance of the sky that softened down all thought of ruin from the scene, and only left it reverence. Jove's own bright star was visible through the pillared vista of his Temple, and shone upon the ancient sanctuary as if it were its Sheckinah. And even thus, in the Elder World, every star was the type of some deity, who veiled his presence under that bright sign; as every mountain had its Oread, and every stream its Nymph, and every aspect of the Beautiful its angel.

The sense of omnipresence that this Pantheism superinduced must have exercised an active influence on the imaginative Greek: every spot of his adored country was holy, or haunted ground; every hill an altar, every cave a sanctuary. When he left his country, the traveller or the exile also left his gods behind him, and became excommunicate by expatriation.

It is said that the Grecian mothers, by being constantly in the presence of the perfect forms of painting and sculpture, became possessed by the spirit of the Beautiful, and transmitted to their race that grace and loveliness which seem almost peculiar to the antique. Thus also the Athenian youth, whose infant eyes first opened upon scenes consecrated to heroism, philosophy, and poetry; whose first intelligence was imbued with the sublime teaching of the Porch or Grove; who looked hourly upon the plains of Marathon, or the Gulf of Salamis — their minds likewise became naturally imbued with the qualities of such a soil, and reproduced from generation to generation the fruits of the last.

But I must not linger here; I myself obtained but a glimpse at Athens owing to a severe illness, and carried away with me an earnest desire to revisit it. The manifold associations which its scenery has such power to reawaken, its delicious climate, the interesting study that its young empire presents, serve to render a residence here the most desirable of any continental city that I know

It has frequently been deplored that Nauplia, or even the Piræus, was not chosen to be the site of the new city instead of Athens. It is well that regenerated Greece should found her hope, and string her energies with the lofty Platonic faith of a glorious though perhaps a visionary, past, that may be realized in her future: but the city of Pericles is dangerous trial-ground for a Bavarian king, and the Phidian temples somewhat discouraging to modern architecture.

Greece may yet attain to wealth, and power, and fame, but never to her ancient fame. At Nauplia, or the Piræus, Greece might become great, and men might wonder at her greatness; but at Athens she is her own most formidable rival. In the shadow of the Acropolis, at the Bema of Demosthenes, among the groves of Academus, what shall modern art, oratory, or philosophy avail?

Nevertheless, it is but the sentiment of the place that is sinned against; modern Athens may soon have a glory of her own—freedom as perfect, and far more catholic* than of yore, may yet flourish on the Cecropian plains; and a prosperous commerce fill the harbour of the Piræus. This is no longer a mere vision, and its realization will be hailed with pleasure by all those to whom her ancient name and fame are dear.

We sailed at sunrise, and reached the isthmus of Corinth about noon: our course lay through the gulph. The scenery of either shore was beautiful; the mountains of Parnassus and Cithæron were in view; the islands of Ægina and Salamis were before us, and at length the Citadel of Corinth, whereon scarce a ruin remains to tell of earth's most voluptuous city. We crossed the Isthmus by a road of six miles in length, and, re-embarking at Lutraki, ran down the Gulph of Lepanto to Patras. The next evening we passed Missolonghi, and stood out into the Adriatic Sea.

## CHAPTER LVI.

### THE IONIAN ISLANDS.

Hurrah for the Spirit of England!
The bold, the true, the free,
Who stretcheth his hand
With a king's command
All over the circling sea!

BARRY CORNWALL.

THE same delightful climate, the same serene, unclouded nights, the fresh, breezy, radiant mornings, and soft, sweet, pensive evenings

* Athens of Pericles contained 20,000 citizens, and 400,000 slaves!

of the land we had left, followed us over the Adriatic Sea.

Long after Missolonghi had passed from our view, it haunted our memories as the last scene of interest in glorious Greece. It is now become classic ground, as the death-scene of the Poet who preached, and the Hero who fought for her sacred cause. Byron's remains have been removed to England, but Botzaris sleeps where he fell—

"dying, as hearts like his should die,
In the hot clasp of Victory."

There are no words in poetry more pathetic than those which Byron wrote at Missolonghi, on his last birthday, breathing through their melody a spirit of utter sadness so mournfully contrasted with the brilliant and daring genius that inspired them. Even this last sad hope was defeated :—

"Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave; for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest."

He lingered unaccountably at Cephalonia, when he might have fought gloriously with Marco Botzaris; and died of quackery at Missolonghi, when he should have been storming the Castle of Lepanto with his Suliotes. Nevertheless—

"O'er the grave of Childe Harold Greek maiden shall weep,
In his own native land his loved relics shall sleep
With the bones of the bravest and best:
His name shall go down to the latest of time—
Fame tell how he fought for earth's loveliest clime,
And Mercy shall blot out the rest."

---

The islands in the Adriatic are of a far fairer aspect than those of the Archipelago. Their forms are as picturesque, and invested with almost as brilliant a colouring, by their glowing atmosphere. Zante is very arcadian-looking in her hills, and her valleys are richly clothed with vineyards of the delicate, small grape, called "uvæ passolinæ" by botanists, and currants by cockneys. The chief town of the island is very pretty and primitive-looking, owing to the low, cottage-look of its houses. This humility is begotten of fear, for the frequent earthquakes would render a second story a sword of Damocles, and the luxurious Zacynthians love to banquet at their ease. There had been two shocks within the twenty-four hours preceding our arrival, which seemed to be considered quite matters of course upon the island.

Ithaca is the most Homeric spot in Greece except the Plains of Troy: its identity has been at length satisfactorily proved, after centuries of suspicion. Leucadia's pale * cliff vindicates its own authenticity. When Sappho's wild heart quenched its love in the waves from whence Love's goddess rose, it appears that many forlorn maidens tried the experiment afterward, and, no doubt, found it equally successful, for the cliff is three hundred feet high.

Cephalonia is the largest island belonging to the Septinsular republic. It contains 50,000 inhabitants, notwithstanding its mountainous and picturesque appearance.

Agostoli, the capital of the island, was scarcely visible in the faint light of a young moon, but it is said to be populous and prosperous.

In the morning we passed by Parga, and about noon came to an anchor in the harbour of Corfu.

Here was a sudden and most pleasant change, from nations numbed by slavery and enervated by vices, or restless with revolutionary fever; to the calm, strong, solid power and influences of our own glorious country. England's flag was flying on the citadel; England's martial music filled the air; and English hearts and hands welcomed us to Christendom. Friends whom I had not seen for years met us on the pier, and escorted us to our hotel.

Although this pretty town has been remodelled and almost rebuilt in the course of the thirty years that have elapsed since the Septinsular Republic came under the British protectorate, there still remains enough of the architecture and the habits of its ancient masters to give it interest and novelty. On some of the more ancient buildings the Lion of St. Mark still remains; while the piazzas, narrow streets, and numerous cafés, have all a Venetian character. The Italian language, too, predominates over Greek and English in the Babel of the streets, and the greater number of the shops are lettered in the same tongue.

As England is the greatest commercial country in the world, it follows that her colonies should be the most numerous and flourishing.* Yet wealth and protection are among the least of the advantages that they derive from the mother country: English character, energy, industry, and tolerance, furnish all the qualifications essential to the increase and stability of a colony. Such has been the case in North America and Australasia; at the Cape, also, and in the East and West Indies, as far as a British population has extended. At Corfu, however, as at Malta and Gibraltar, there is no attempt at colonization: not only is there

* From λευκος, white; as Albion, from Albus.

* England and her colonies occupy about one-sixth of the inhabited world. Queen Victoria rules over about 100,000,000 of people directly, and at least an equal number of subsidiaries.

no agricultural settlement, but there are no great commercial houses to weave the only inseparable links that unite dissimilar nations. If England were to abandon her Mediterranean possessions to-morrow, every one of her people would move to the tap of the drum, or the boatswain's whistle; empty barracks and dockyards would be the only property she would abandon. The Englishman never amalgamates with a foreign people: he can master, and make himself familiar with, their sea, their soil, their produce; but in their cities he is still a stranger. The English are as much isolated among the Corfuotes at this hour as the French would be among the Fezzians; very few speak Italian, and the islanders show equal inaptitude to learn English: even at the Government House, notwithstanding the kind manner and the tact of Lord S——, I thought that his Ionian guests appeared constrained and uncomfortable; while our countrymen and women appeared only inclined to cultivate the society of each other.

Nevertheless, this military colony of ours does what it considers to be its business right well and manfully: the free and independent bearing of the people, as they walk the streets, tell at once of evenhanded justice and impartial rule; and, from the few intelligent natives whom it was my fortune to converse with, I heard no expression of complaint against England, except on some constitutional points which they thought should be amended.*

When we arrived, we found numerous reports in circulation respecting the approaching revolution at Athens, as connected with the arrival of Prince George of Cambridge at Corfu. It was insisted that Otho was to be expelled, and a new Grecian kingdom, of which the Ionian Islands were to form part, was to be created, with the British prince for its monarch!

Corfu looks eastward, across a narrow strait, upon Albania. There the Crescent spreads its inevitably disastrous influence: the magnificent mountains are the barren strongholds of outlaws or rebels; the luxuriant but neglected valleys are thinly inhabited by a people contending for their very existence against pestilence and oppression. A few miles of water divide this stricken land from the prosperous and beautiful island of Corfu —the Corcyra so fatal to Athenian greatness —the site of the Gardens of Alcinous.

This island might seem all garden, in the Eden acceptation of the term, for no where do earth, ocean, and sky, form more rich and varied combinations: the soft and sunny valleys, the wild and shadowy glens, the gleaming rivers, the lofty precipices, the beetling cliffs, and bright blue sea, furnish all that Poussin and Salvator Rosa could desire, if they wished to form a joint picture to illustrate and contrast their style.

* When England accepted the protectorate of the Ionian Republic, assigned to her in 1815, she undertook to grant or to continue to them a free constitution. This consists of a House of Assembly, containing forty members, returned by the Seven Islands in a proportion relative to their population. From this House of Assembly, a senate, or council, composed of six members, is selected by the Lord High Commissioner. These are, in fact, the ministry of the Republic, each presiding over a particular department, and receiving a salary of £800 per annum, while the President of the Council has an income of £1300. As the members of this council (whatever island they may belong to) are obliged constantly to reside at Corfu during their administration, this allowance is necessary to induce them to accept office. The House of Assembly only sits for three months in every second year: the power of convening or proroguing is vested in the Lord High Commissioner; that of dissolution, in the Crown alone.

This appears a sufficiently free form of government; and the only complaints I heard against it were, that the system of representation was corrupt; that there was no freedom of the press; and that Corfu was taxed to pay England.

With respect to the former, a list of the persons whom the Lord High Commissioner deems eligible for representatives is sent to each island previous to an election: the electors may choose from out that list alone: if they don't like A., they must have B. To this objection I heard it replied that the islands, if left to their own selection, would return none but deputies of the Anti-English party, which would involve the government in perpetual difficulty.

With respect to the Freedom of the Press, however invaluable that liberty may be in a great country, it appears to be productive of very indifferent results in a small community, where its spirit must be mainly fed upon personalities and imaginary grievances, as is the case at Malta.

The third ground of complaint is the tax of £36,000 per annum claimed by England for purposes said to be unconnected with the interests of the island. It is true that this sum was formerly levied and applied to the repair of the existing fortifications and the creation of new; but it has not been levied for the last five years, and probably never will again. Moreover, the expenditure of English money in the island amounts to at least five times the amount of this tax.

I mention these accusations against the English government as proving how little reason exists for complaint. The benefits conferred upon the Republic, and upon Corfu especially, by English rule, are not so easily enumerated. Sir Thomas Maitland (familiarly known in the island as "King Tom") first reduced the island to order and security: roads were made in every direction; lazarettos built; schools established; the town and fortifications repaired; commerce encouraged; and a native police created.

The island appeared, to my superficial observation, to be prosperous and thriving, with full employment for its people, and a fair rate of remuneration for labour. Under any circumstances, we may proudly contrast its present state with that which it exhibited under the tyranny of the Venetian "proveditori," the Russian "commandants,' and —worse than all—of its own factious authorities.

The roads are excellent, but steep; and, winding (without battlements) round the brow of rocky promontories, or through narrow gorges of deep valleys, they diverted my attention not a little from the scenery to the undisciplined team of Albanian horses with which we perambulated the island.

The town is flanked by the citadel and the strong fortress of CastelNuovo. The batteries on the little island of Vido complete a triangle with those of the two former. The citadel is built upon a rock rising so abruptly from the sea, that, during the siege, Nelson had formed the daring plan of running his ship close in shore, giving her a list to port, and *boarding* the batteries from his top-gallant yards, which would have just reached to the level of the lowest parapet.

Immense sums of money had been latterly expended on these fortifications, which it would take ten thousand men to garrison; yet it seems questionable whether Cerigo be not the only island of the Republic that is worth preserving, being not far from the present Indian route, affording the only good anchorage, and a most favourable situation for a coal depôt.

Albania is in quarantine, so that I was obliged to take two officers of the English board of health as guardianos during my excursions there. Notwithstanding this Hygeian guard, I caught a low fever in the marshes of Butrinlo, which terminated my wanderings, and leaves me nothing farther to record.

---

Reader!—you have been my only fellow-traveller through many lands; wherever I have wandered you have been; whatever I have learned you have known; yet I scarcely venture to hope that you will share in the regret with which I say—Farewell!

# APPENDIX.

## HINTS TO TRAVELLERS IN THE EAST.

The following observations may be of use to those about to visit Egypt and Syria, as the state of affairs in these countries is hourly changing, and the latest intelligence is always of some value.

Most travellers are influenced in the time of their departure from England by other motives than those which the almanac supplies; but, though a man may not be able to choose his own time for starting, he can always select his own route, whereby he may correct the inconvenience of unsuitable seasons.

If you leave England in the spring, you should either go by Vienna and Pesth, down the Danube to Constantinople, or by long sea to Malta, and thence to Greece. Summer weather is essential to the enjoyment of travel in the northern countries: winter is very severe, and takes your constitution by surprise.

If you leave England in the autumn, your best course will be to begin with Egypt, whereby you will avoid winter altogether, and reach Syria in the spring. The best time for ascending the Nile is November or December. By leaving England in the Oriental steamer on the 3rd of October, you arrive in Alexandria about the 21st. A river steamer takes you thence to Cairo in thirty hours. A fortnight may be very profitably spent there in examining the environs, observing the curious drama of Egyptian life, and making use of the excellent library. Besides, you have your boat to engage, and it is essential to have her sunk in order to banish rats and other vermin, and in most cases to have her newly painted besides.

The first class boats cost from £16 to £35 a month, including the pay of the ten or fourteen sailors, who find themselves in every article of food, dress, &c. If you take an Arab boat, it is far better to engage her by the job, stipulating to be allowed to remain wherever you please at a certain rate per day extra. This course avoids much delay and annoyance, caused by the devices of the Arabs to prolong the journey when taken by time.

If you purpose going beyond the First Cataract, insist upon having a firman; it is your right, and you may suffer much annoyance owing to the want of it. The different expeditions up the Nile are generally, first, to Thebes, which occupies about three weeks in average weather, including your stay at the various places on your route: secondly, to the First Cataract, which occupies about five weeks: and thirdly, to the Second Cataract, which requires at least two months' absence from Cairo. From all that I have heard and seen, I believe that none but the enthusiastic antiquary will find any inducement to proceed further than this last place.

Your comfort during your stay in the East will depend mainly on your dragoman. These men offer themselves to you at Malta in swarms, but I am inclined to think that an Egyptian is preferable in his own country. It is well to engage your dragoman only on the recommendation of some European on whom you can rely. A Maltese dragoman charges a dollar a day; an Egyptian half that sum. You require two servants exclusive of the crew, one to cook, the other to attend you on your expeditions.

On returning to Cairo from the Upper Nile, the best route to Syria is through the desert by Suez and Mount Sinai, to Petra and Hebron. Our consul is the only person to be depended upon for making arrangements with the Bedouin to conduct you through the desert. The journey as far as Hebron or Jerusalem is performed on dromedaries; thenceforward on horses. Besides the interest of this route, you avoid a fortnight's quarantine, which you would have to undergo at Beyrout, in sailing thither from an Egyptian port.

The winter climate of Egypt is perhaps the most delightful in the world, and the mode of travelling admirably adapted for invalids. Those to whom health is the chief object, may sail from Southampton on the 3rd of October, and penetrate 1,000 miles into Africa by the 1st of December, without greater exertion than is necessary to step on board a boat. The attention is pleasantly occupied; all the objects of interest are close to the river; and by the 1st of February the invalid may find himself on his way to England, having altogether escaped winter, and found in the course of his 6,000 miles' travel such repose as is vainly to be sought for in the tranquillest Western life.

If you purpose only to visit Egypt, books are almost the only necessary you need take from England. Guns and wire cartridges for the various wild-fowl; rifles and iron bullets for wild boars and crocodiles will suggest themselves to the sportsman. A camera lucida is of great use in taking a view of the complicated details of Egyptian architecture in a short time. Powder, books, and stationery are the three great essentials for the Egyptian traveller; they are scarcely to be procured after leaving Malta.

The traveller who proposes to visit Syria should in the first place endeavour to procure the Sultan's firman, which will be sent from Constantinople to meet him at Cairo, Jerusalem, or Beyrout. An English saddle and holsters, spurs and pistols, are indispensable. A small strong canteen is the only other English article of much importance. I am inclined to think that with regard to dress there is nothing like the turban of the country, a blouse of coloured camlet, (not green, which sometimes provokes indignation, as the sacred colour of the Moslem) a pair of loose doe-skin pantaloons, and half or Hessian boots, of tan leather, (black attracts the sun, and can't well be cleaned) will make perhaps the most convenient and comfortable costume.

The most convenient commissariat consists of maccaroni, rice, and preserved meats, which last should be taken from England in small packages. They are to be had, however, at Alexandria and Beyrout. Wine, porter, and liqueurs should be bought at Malta; the latter, particularly maraschino, are greatly prized by the Turkish governors, &c., and is the most popular present, except gunpowder. This, if good, is the most valuable present you can make, either to Oriental or to European.

A small medicine chest is useful; but for all practical purposes, some calomel, quinine, ipecacuanha, Seidlitz powders, sticking-plaster, and a lancet, are sufficient. It would be well to have a measurement of the quantities for each dose made by some medical man who has visited the East, as the effect of medicine upon the system varies considerably with the climate. The principal use of remedies is for the people among whom you travel: temperance and your mode of life almost preclude illness, except the fevers of the country, from yourself; common caution will guard against these, and in most cases the severe but delightful action of a Turkish bath will remove any unpleasant sensation caused by suppressed perspiration, which is the chief if not the only danger of the climate.

The following articles are useful in Egypt:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Levinge's apparatus for keeping off vermin .. .. .. .. | from England |
| Saddle, holsters, cloak straps, spurs | ditto |
| Hammer, gimlets, nails, screws, thermometer, and compass .. .. | ditto |
| Gun, shot, powder, caps, strong fishing tackle, wire cartridges .. | ditto |
| Sale's Koran, Arabic grammar, Assaad-y-Kayat's Vocabulary, and all sorts of books .. .. .. | ditto |
| Pencils, paper, all stationery, and lamps .. .. .. .. | ditto |
| Mackintosh beds are a great luxury, and are always clean .. .. | ditto |
| Cartridges for pistols, and wooden ramrod fixed in holsters to keep in the charge .. .. .. .. | ditto |
| Porter, potatoes, and Irish salt butter | ditto |
| Sherry .. .. .. .. .. | from Gibraltar |
| Wine and liqueurs, maccaroni, and ship biscuit .. .. .. .. | from Malta |
| Coarse check shirts, and duck trousers | ditto |

As to time, a traveller may take his passage to Cadiz, go by diligence to Seville, ride to Gibraltar, and take up the Egyptian steamer: pass two days at Malta, ascend to the Second Cataract, and return to England within four months.

If he adds Palestine to his tour, it will cause an addition of two months, via Beyrout or Jaffa; of three, via Mount Sinai and Petra. Asia Minor, Constantinople, and Greece, say four months more.

If the traveller leaves England in spring, and proceeds via Greece, he will have the advantage in point of quarantine. From Greece to Constantinople, and thence to Smyrna, Rhodes, Cyprus, and Telmerous, he has no interruption. This last place has been made interesting by Mr. C. Fellowes's most important discoveries: it is to be visited from Rhodes. The usual period of voyaging may be thus averaged: Southampton to Gibraltar, six days; Gibraltar to Malta, six days; Malta to Alexandria, five days; Alexandria to Beyrout by sailing-packet, three days; Beyrout to Rhodes, three days; Rhodes to Constantinople, five days; Constantinople to Smyrna, two days; Smyrna to Athens, two days; thence to Patras, twenty-four hours; Patras to Corfu, thirty-six hours; Corfu to Malta, three days.

With respect to quarantine, it is to be remem-

bered that all Moslem countries lie under its restrictions: the only means of avoiding it is by taking the Oriental steamers from Malta or Alexandria, when, the voyage being allowed, you have seldom more than two or three days to wait for pratique at Portsmouth. If you begin your tour by Egypt, you have a quarantine of twelve days at Beyrout; twelve more at Constantinople; twelve more at Greece. If you begin your journey at Greece, you may visit Constantinople, Smyrna, Rhodes, and Syria, without performing quarantine; and if you cross the desert from Jerusalem, you have no quarantine in Egypt. You should not be in Egypt after April, or in Syria before the end of March. In May, the Bosphorus is in its greatest beauty.

The Peninsula and Oriental steamers sail from Southampton on the 3rd of every month, at 2 p.m. for Alexandria; for Vigo, Oporto, Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar, every Thursday at 3 p.m.; for Constantinople, by way of Malta, Athens, Syra, and Smyrna, on the 25th of each month. The fares are, to Alexandria £46 10s., to Malta, £34; servants less than half. These prices include first-class accommodations, provisions and wine *à discretion*. The Company's office is at 51, St. Mary Axe, London.

There is also a means of getting to Egypt in less time, viâ Marseilles. French steamers sail from that port on the 4th of every month at 5 p.m. They are expected to reach Alexandria in seven days; it takes from seven to nine days to reach Marseilles from London. For my own part, I very much prefer the long sea voyage; and I think that most people who have experienced the difference between English and French steamers, will prefer two or three days' additional sailing in the former.

With respect to money, letters of credit are preferable to any other mode. The bankers at Malta and Alexandria manage so as to lay a heavy deduction on circular notes. You receive for the latter about 96 per cent from the bankers. For bills cashed by *merchants*, you receive from 104 to 105½ per cent. About £50 a month covers all the expenses that the traveller, unless very luxurious, can require in the East; for two or more travelling together, I should think the expense was nearly half the above.

It is well to make your dragoman your purse-bearer; make him strictly accountable to you, but never pay with your own hands. Insist on the most profound respect; preserve your temper and nonchalance as your best title to influence and security. Never join in a row; let your people fight it out: if you must act, do so firmly, boldly, and fearlessly of consequences: there *are* no consequences that can concern a right-minded Frank. It is too frequently the habit among our countrymen to dress ludicrously or meanly. This is a great mistake, and militates much against the wearer. In the East, dress is naturally looked upon as a test of the wearer's quality, and he cannot be surprised if he is treated accordingly.

The English traveller should always remember that he is considered by the Orientals as a representative of his country; and that, according to his liberality, courage, and temper, impressions are formed of the nation he belongs to, from which the East is now expecting great things. The people of the West are known to the people of Egypt and Syria only as *Frangee*, or Franks, and *Ingeeleez* or English, and I think I may venture to say that they make a wide difference in favour of the latter, which it behoves every traveller to maintain.

THE END.

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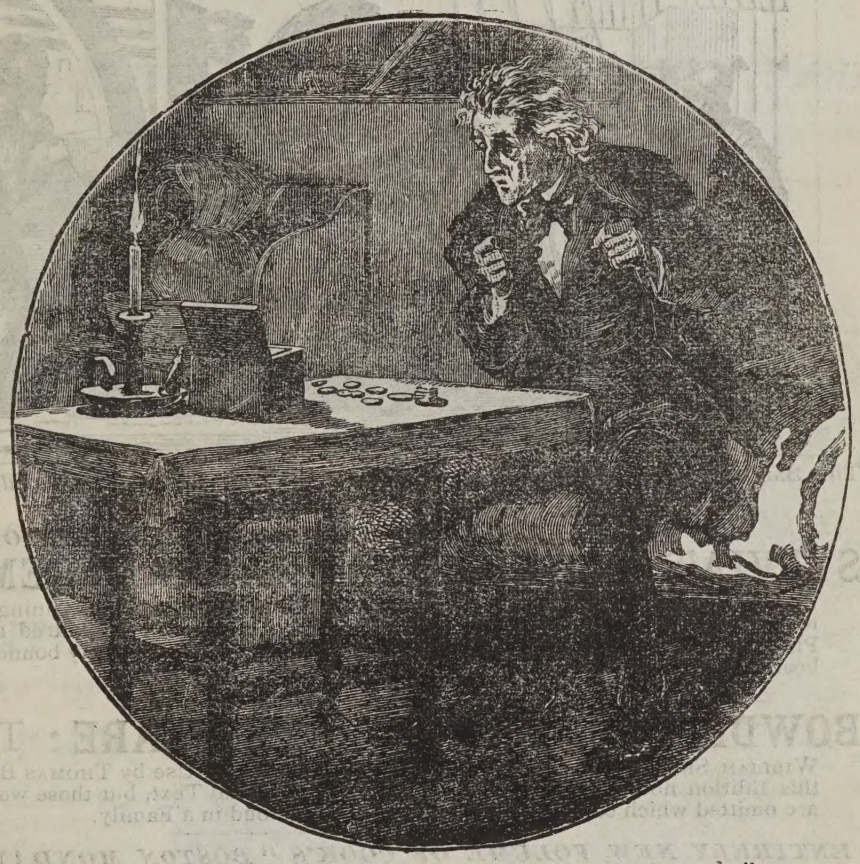

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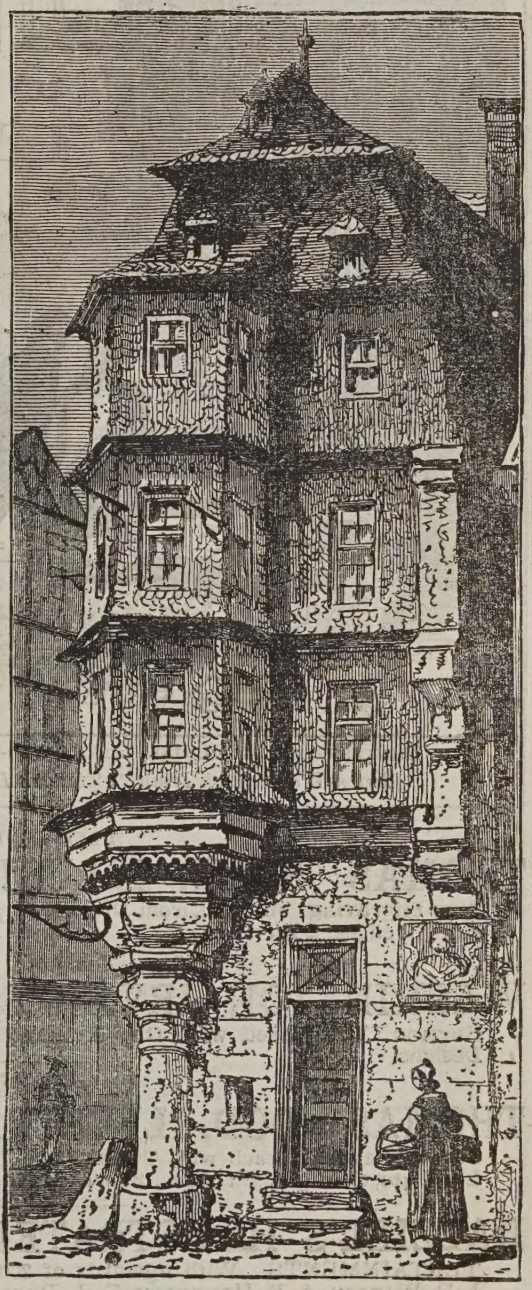

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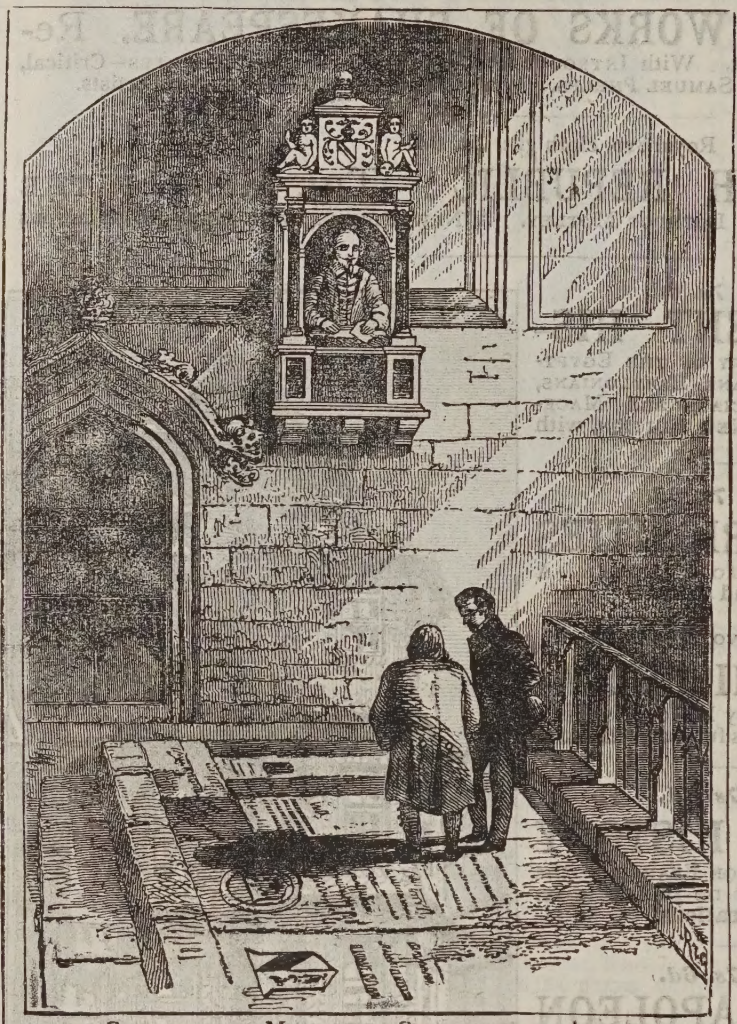

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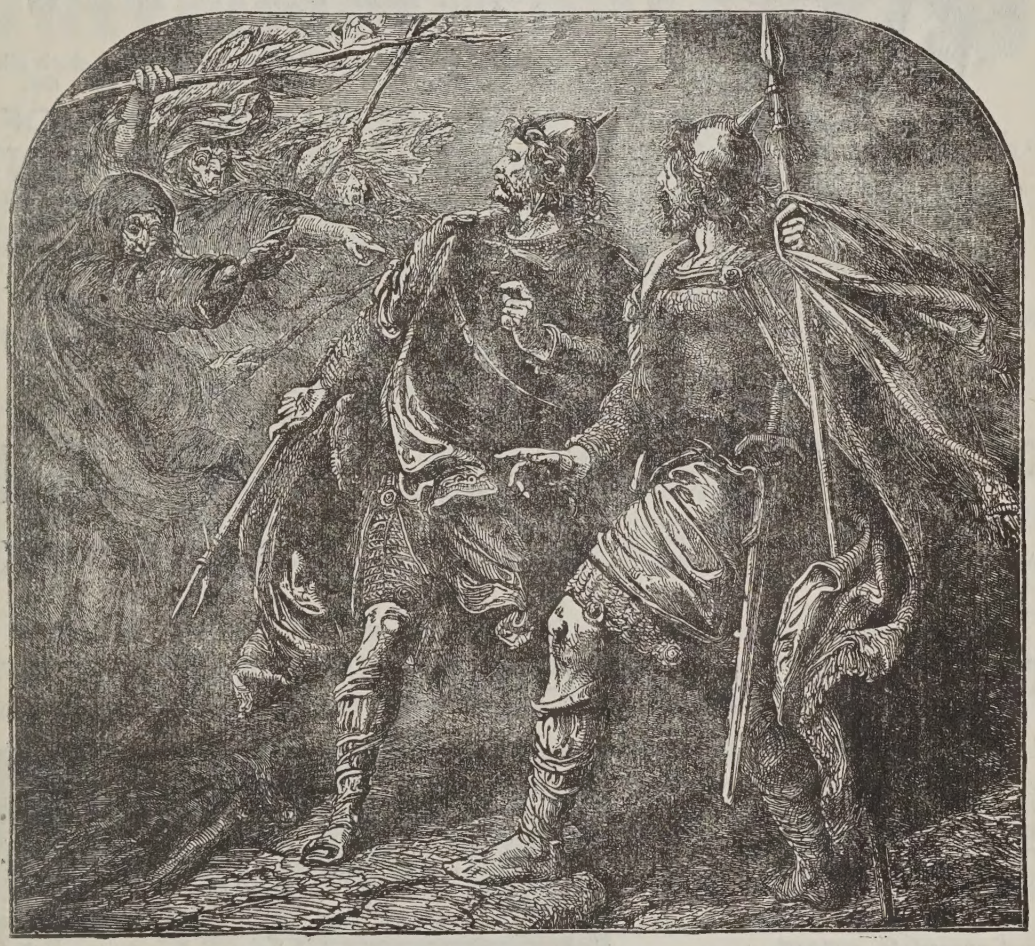

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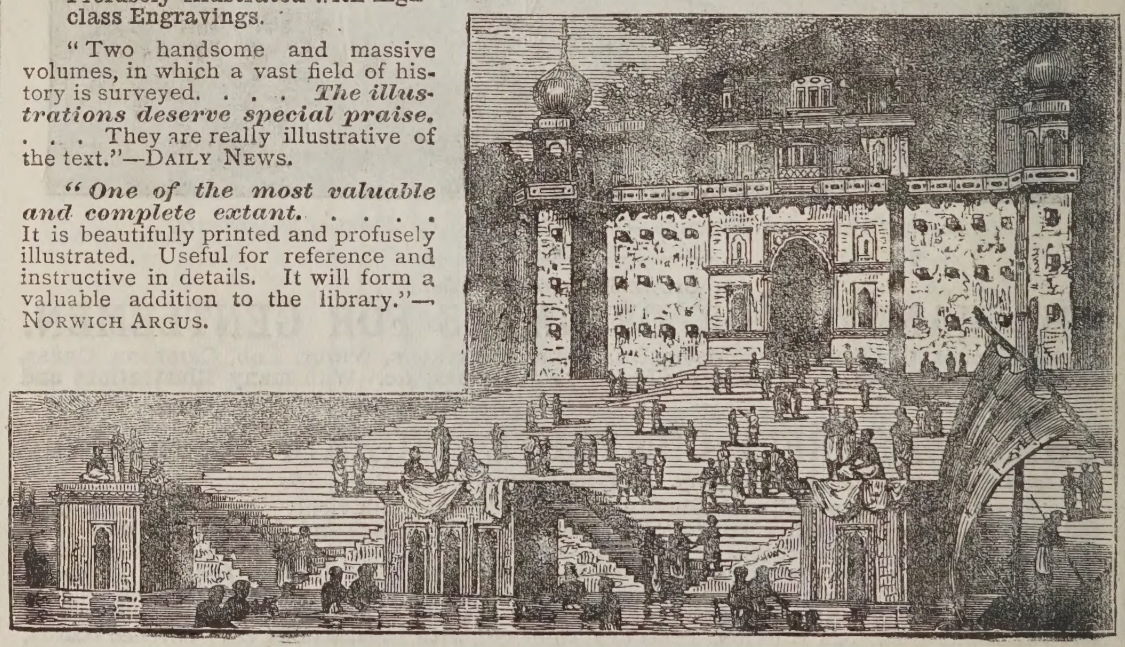

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